

REAL ESTATE JOBBING AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Volume 4



“A Business Tool for the 21st Century”

Barry J Grimes

The 2004 Real Estate Jobber Course - Volume 4

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Jobbing and the World Wide Web! Volume 4, Real Estate Jobbing and the World Wide Web is designed to give you a detailed understanding of how a website and the [Internet](#) can be beneficial to your Real Estate Jobber business.

Real Estate Jobbing Volume 4



The Targets for Volume 4

1. To understand how the Internet is being used by businesses today, and how it will be used in the future.
2. To understand why your Jobber business should have a website.
3. To understand why the Internet is so popular.
4. To understand how a website can be used as a valuable business tool.
5. To discover what the various components of a website are, and how they work.
6. To understand the website development process.
7. To learn how to build your own website inexpensively and professionally.
8. To learn how to diversify the use of your website for maximum profit.
9. To recommend cost effective resources for building your website.

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You have probably already read the first three Volumes of the Real Estate Jobber Course, and understand how much money can be made in your spare time as a Jobber. As a Real Estate Investor you can generate extreme wealth. The Internet and a website are just additional tools to help you achieve these goals, albeit very powerful tools.

I decided to write this fourth volume in the Real Estate Jobber Course, because I received so many inquiries from Jobbers asking how to economically set up and use a website for their business. I've been designing and using websites for business purposes for over seven years. It's only natural to carry this tool over to the Jobber business.

What I discovered was that no one else was using a website as a means of communication with Investors. In fact 90% of the Investors didn't even have a website themselves! It's been a very effective tool and the Investors love the convenience it provides.

My goal is to help Jobbers "build it right the first time". Don't waste hundreds of dollars setting up a website that would simply be overkill, and not provide any tangible results. However, I also don't want you to get a free website that will only harm your reputation.

There is a happy medium, which will be easy on your pocketbook and provide the outstanding results that you need. With that being said, let's get started!

We will start with a discussion on why having a website is so important for your Jobber business. The Internet is more popular than ever, and

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is expected to continue gaining popularity for the next several years. We will look at why the Internet's popularity is exploding.

Websites have taken a 180-degree turn from just a few years ago. We will explore what's driving the changes on the information superhighway. Understanding these changes will help your Jobber business stay current with the ever-expanding Internet technology.

The numerous ways that a website can help your business will be discussed in detail. The anatomy of a website will be dissected and explained piece by piece.

We will go through the website development process step-by-step and explain what is involved during each phase of the cycle. We will then go back through the cycle and see how an actual Jobber website is built.

I will have recommendations that will allow you to build and operate a website for your Jobber business, that will be cost effective and professional. It does not pay to put up a poorly designed website that your Investors and other visitors will not take seriously.

As you read through this Volume please keep in mind that I will help guide you through the technical jungle, to the best resources available for your Jobber website.

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WHY HAVE A WEBSITE?

I'm sure you've heard all of the hype:

- ✓ Your website is open 24 hours a day
- ✓ Your website is the gateway to the world
- ✓ Everyone else has a website
- ✓ And so on, and so on...

Don't get me wrong these are all valid statements, but they are not the reason for a Real Estate Jobber to set up a [website](#). Let's dig a little deeper and see if we can find a more compelling reason. The reason is very simply:

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The Future is Now!



No, I'm not talking about flying cars! I mean **the Internet will be one of the most important tools a business can have, in the 21st century.** A website allows your Jobber business to take full advantage of this tool.

If you were an author, think of the Internet as your word processor. Sure you could write your book with a typewriter, but why not take advantage of technology and save time and money?

Do you think that Internet use will increase or decrease over the next few years? If you said decrease, think again. **The Internet is not a fad**

that will quietly go away (like some people had hoped). Let's take a look at the numbers, and there are a lot of numbers!

U.S. Online Households (in millions)							
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Asian-American	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.9	3.2	3.4	3.6
Hispanic	4.5	5.0	5.5	6.2	6.8	7.4	8.0
African-American	6.1	6.8	7.4	8.1	8.9	9.6	10.2
Caucasian and others	49.6	52.6	55.9	59.3	62.6	66.2	67.1
Source: Jupiter Research							

Figure 1 - US Households Online

What does this chart tell us about Internet usage? Well a couple of important facts. The Internet is not going away, despite how much some people want it to.

The number of Internet users has increased every year since 1996, and is projected to continue increasing substantially through 2007. The number of households online will have increased by 39percent over this 6-year period.

The Internet has already become ingrained into the daily life of Americans. It's almost as common as the telephone. As access to the Internet becomes more affordable, the number of people "afraid" to use the Internet will continue to decrease.

Internet growth is crossing social, gender and racial lines. As shown in the chart above, a steady growth in the number of households online for all major racial groups is forecasted.

WHY IS THE INTERNET SO POPULAR?

Vast Information



One reason is quick and easy access to information. A world of information can be found online. Need to know how to build a doghouse? Want a great recipe for General Tao's Chicken? Want to know where you can see the latest movies? Need directions from Alliance Ohio to Ann Arbor Michigan?

The answers are just seconds away with a few clicks on the keyboard. Information is power. Who wouldn't love having nearly unlimited access to information?

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Communication



Communication is another major reason why Internet use continues to increase. Remember this? You would hand write a letter, address an envelope, stuff the envelope, buy a stamp and take the letter to a mail box.

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Now you just type out an e-mail and click the send button. I stay in touch with my family more than ever since the advent of e-mail. You can even use a web cam to see and talk to people over the Internet.



We recently had a baby. I set up a family website, where we frequently post pictures of the baby for our family in other states to see.

They simply go to the web address and see pictures, hear the baby's first sounds and can even watch streaming video. Technology is a wonderful thing!

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Convenience



The convenience of the Internet let's you sit back and relax. **You can pay the majority of your bills on line**, which saves stamps and assures your payment is posted promptly.

If I need to change my phone service or TV service, it's just a matter of going to the company's website and in a few minutes the changes are in.

No more sitting on hold for what seems like forever! You can order tickets for the next football game, get tickets to a movie for this evening, book a vacation or buy groceries. It's a major time and money saver.

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Portability



Yes, the Internet is becoming more portable everyday. This means that we can have access to the Internet, no matter where we are. The number of **wireless Internet users is expected to increase from 149 million in 2001 to 236 million in 2007, a 58 percent increase.** In 2007 nearly half of all Internet users will connect through cell phones.

Imagine doing a drive-by and you spot an ugly house. You will be able to access the public records with you high-speed Internet connection via your cell phone or laptop. Talk about convenience. Now how great is that?

Wireless Internet Usage and Projections			
Year-End	2001	2004	2007
USA			
Internet Users (millions)	149	193	236
Wireless Internet User Share	4.5	27.9%	46.3%
Source: Computer Industry Almanac			

Figure 2 - Wireless Internet Users

In the very near future many cars will be equipped with a device to access the Internet. This will allow users to do a variety of activities during travel, which would be very useful for long trips. The Internet represents efficiency at its best.

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Interactivity



The Internet is extremely interactive. There are numerous surveys on television during sports, news and talk shows asking for your opinion.

You simply go online to cast your vote, and within minutes the results are available. People with WebTV don't even have to go to their computer to participate!

Americans love interactivity. For instance the use of interactive TV (iTV) will double in the next few years. iTV is the technology

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that allows you to order cable and satellite movies through your remote control.

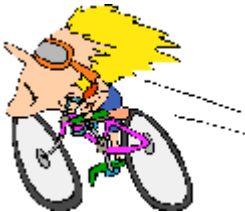
Some systems even allow you to order the clothing and other items used in the shows with a push of your remote control button.

2001	5.2
2002	11.6
2003	19.9
2004	29.8
2005	41.1
Source: The Strategis Group	

Figure 3 - iTV Users

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High Speed Access



High-speed access will also continue to increase the Internet's popularity. [Cable](#) and [DSL](#) modems allow connection speeds hundreds of times faster than traditional dial up modems.

This allows users to download files in a few minutes that used to take hours using a dial up modem. I sure hope you had a high-speed connection to [download](#) your Real Estate Jobber course and Biz Toolz!

High-speed connections are very popular for people who download a lot of music, movies and software, all legally of course! Why wait for your products to be shipped when you can download them immediately, without shipping cost? There's that saving money factor again.

Another great advantage of broadband (high-speed) connections is the fact that your telephone (land based) line is not tied up while you are on the Internet. Do you think people are willing to pay between \$40 and \$50 a month for a high-speed connection? Check out the numbers below.

U.S. Broadband Households, 2001-2007		
Year	Penetration	Households (millions)
2001	17%	10.4
2002	23%	15.7
2003	30%	21.4
2004	35%	26.7
2005	39%	32.0
2006	43%	36.8
2007	56%	40.7
Source: Jupiter Research (a unit of this site's corporate parent)		

Figure 4 - US Broadband Households

The number of households with broadband connections will nearly double between 2003 and 2007.

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Now We Know!

Okay, I think we've answered the question of "why have a website". It's because **we are in a digital age**, where more and more Americans will rely on the Internet to conduct business.

We have also established the fact that the **popularity of the Internet will continue to soar** into the foreseeable future. We now know of several very sound reasons why the Internet will continue to gain usage. The facts are indisputable that the Internet will be a vital business tool.

I realize that not **every** businessperson has embraced the Internet as an indispensable tool; but check the numbers again, they don't lie.

The future and technology won't wait for anyone to catch up.
They are very unforgiving.

I haven't answered what **will** change about business websites and the Internet. We will dive into that next.

WEBSITES FOR A NEW MILLINIUUM



Just when you thought you had it figured out **the information superhighway changes directions** again! But that's good news for you.

Websites are now an informational business tool, compared to a few years ago when the emphasis was on e-commerce.

In the mid to late 1990s there were thousands of Internet malls, gift shops and an array of other retail oriented sites. **Low start up costs and eager shoppers made this a very attractive opportunity.**

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The Old Dot Com Days

Those dot coms have gone the way of the dinosaur for the most part. They were chased away by the big boys. Many small dot coms got a big jump on the large retailers and made some pretty good money for a few years.

I started off in 1996 with an online gift store, called homecyberstore. It was a typical retail store with hundreds of gifts. It had a shopping

cart system that took credit card orders and my suppliers would drop ship the merchandise to my customers.

The **big brick and mortar** stores paid little attention to these operations, until they realized that **billions were being made online**. This spelled the beginning of the end. Luckily I moved on before the bottom dropped out.

A few dot coms hung on for a couple of years, but lost their shirts going for big time advertising, like during the Super Bowl. The big players like Sears, JC Penny's and Walmart now dominate Internet retail sales.

The one exception of course is amazon.com, which is by far the top shopping site on the web. Amazon had, and still has an amazing marketing and operational strategy. Their customer service is second to none. Check out their website when you get a chance. They have almost anything you want.

amazon.com.

<http://www.amazon.com>

Just over a couple of years ago 130 online retail stores died, including many of the giants; furniture.com, pets.com and mothernature.com, just to name a few. It's pretty obvious that retail is not the best type of website to have, unless you have a very unique product that the big boys don't carry.

For instance there is a website that offers over 250 varieties of hot sauce, not found anywhere else. They will be successful in the niche they carved out.

“An Internet company increases its odds of success by its level of specialization”, according to Vint Cerf, one of the Internet’s co-founders, that’s right he help put *the Internet* in the main stream.

Amazon, E-bay and Yahoo will probably be around for a long time, because of their uniqueness and customer base.

Guess what? Real Estate Jobbing is a very specialized service that’s perfect for the web, but more on that later. Let’s stick to the websites of the 21st century for right now.

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Small Business Websites for the 21st Century

American Express conducted a very interesting survey of small business owners on how they use the Internet. Let’s review the results.



66 percent indicated that they have integrated the Internet as a tool to help them run their businesses. Among the common online business activities were:

- ✓ Making travel plans
- ✓ Purchasing office supplies
- ✓ Market research

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- ✓ Marketing or advertising
- ✓ Networking with other businesses
- ✓ Managing accounts and making payments

Many small businesses are now embracing technology, especially the Internet and websites. As you can see they use websites to conduct a variety of business functions.

The same is true for Real Estate Jobbers, there are numerous customers who might seek information from your website including, Investors, Motivated Sellers and Network Contacts.

In another survey of small business owners conducted by Lewis, Mobilio & Associated, for Homestead Technologies. 61percent indicated that the Internet had positively impacted their bottom line.

Hey, that's what we're all in business for!



On the subject of a website:

77 percent agree that a website is a "must have" for small businesses going forward.

60 percent wished they had built a website for their business sooner.

85 percent would advise other small business owners to have a website in the near future.

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51 percent view the Internet as more cost effective than other marketing methods.

This is pretty telling stuff.

"Small business owners are embracing the Internet and clearly see the value in having a website," said Lynne Mobilio one of the partners at Lewis Mobilio & Associates.

The small business owners cited other major benefits of a business website including, easier customer communication, name recognition and credibility. The Internet will definitely be a top choice for marketing among small businesses during 2004 and into the near future.



In another survey of small business conducted for Verizon's superpages.com, small business owners indicated that they used the Internet as a proactive customer relations and marketing tool.

Almost 66 percent reported having a website, and that the Internet is important or extremely important to their business. On a scale of 1 to 10, they rate its importance a 7 or higher.

How are small businesses using their websites? Increasingly websites are being used for advertising and communications.

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In 2001, 36 percent of small businesses with a website established the site to advertise their businesses and provide company information. Only 9 percent of all websites were established to purely sell products or services online.

The Gallup Organization conducted yet another small business Internet survey in mid 2001, again there were some very interesting results.

More service-oriented businesses are getting websites than any other industry segment. Companies in the financial, **real estate** and insurance industries have experienced a 160 percent growth rate since 1999.

Fifty-seven percent of small businesses said their website has provided at least a 100 return on investment. More than half of the businesses were planning site enhancements in the form of new marketing efforts, site redesign, additional services and increased advertising for the site.

Fifty-two percent would like to add an online lead generation service, 24 percent are interested in scheduling applications and 20 percent would like to increase their exposure to the Hispanic community with a Spanish version of their site.

All of the research indicates that websites for the majority of small businesses are used as an **informational and marketing tool**. Many small business owners are already seeking creative new ways to increase the effectiveness of their websites.

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What Does it All Mean?



I hope your head doesn't hurt too badly, but I warned you that I had a few numbers for you! Sorry for bombarding you with the surveys and numbers, but I want to assure you that the website building approach that I recommend is backed by solid research and not some advertising gimmick.

Clearly the **Internet is how business will be conducted during this century**, and if you aren't ready you will be left behind. A website is the most effective means of connecting you with your customers. I suggest that you establish a website for your Jobber business, once you get your feet wet.

Most of the Real Estate websites belong to Realtors® and Real Estate Agencies. These sites concentrate on property listings. **There are very few Investors with websites**, even though the Internet would be the perfect compliment to their print and sign advertising.

How much more effective would their ads be if a website address was included?

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If you set up a website for your Jobber business, I guarantee you will be amongst only a handful that has a site. And guess what? You will really stand out.



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CAN A WEBSITE HELP MY JOBBER BUSINESS?

Okay, so you understand that small businesses are using their websites as business tools for the purpose of advertising, communicating with customers and improving customer service. But you ask, “how can a website really help my Jobber business”

Good question, I’m glad you asked.



First and foremost, as the research indicated it’s one of your business tools. **We all have to juggle many tasks.** How can you use this business tool to help? Another great question, let’s take a look at a few of the ways.

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Investor Communication

While generating leads you will undoubtedly take pictures of properties to provide to your Investors. This **can shorten the process time**, as the Investor can tell if the property is worth checking out. The numbers may look good, but the picture may bring to light something else.

The Investor will have some knowledge before hand, and be **better prepared** when approaching the owner. Think back to the Getting Started Volume, you want to provide the Investor with as much

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information as possible to save her time. This is why your services are so valuable.

The pictures can be sent through e-mail, but you may have to send them one at a time, which can be very cumbersome and time consuming. If the Investor has a dial up modem the pictures could take forever to download.



An Investor won't want to wait around for hours downloading pictures. They could drive to the property faster! E-mail services have different allowable file attachment sizes. If the digital photo file is too big it could crash the Investor's e-mail service. You definitely don't want that to happen.

With a website you would simply post the photos to your site, and e-mail the Investor a **hyperlinked** web address to view the pictures. It would look something like this (don't click on it):

<http://www.ezpropertytsolutions.com/investor1.htm>

The investor simply clicks the link and in a snap; she's at your website looking at the pictures. If you notice the last part of the link is investor1.htm. You will set up a special page for each Investor. This will keep each Investor's leads confidential.

You can have a page called investor2.htm, investor3.htm and so on. Of course each investor will only know of their private link. If you

really want to get security conscience you can set passwords for each page, but I doubt an Investor wants to remember a password.

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Lead Collection



You can also use your website to collect leads from your Network Contacts. You can set up a lead generation form, that your Network Contacts would access through your website. They enter the property information into a form, press the submit button and the data is sent to you automatically through e-mail.

Again you are making it as **convenient as possible** to collect information. Here's how your form might look.

**PROPERTY
EZ
SOLUTIONS**

[FrontPage Save Results Component]

LEAD SUBMISSION FORM

Lead Submitted By: Phone:

Date: E-Mail Address:

Property Address:

City:

Property Status
☒ Vacant
☐ Occupied

General Property Notes

Thank you for your lead submission, I will send you an e-mail confirmation.
Please Click Submit to send your lead!

Figure 5 - Sample Online Lead Submit Form

Your network contact simply enters his personal information, checks off whether the property is vacant or occupied, enters any other notes and clicks the "submit" button. The whole process should **take less than a minute**. Of course the process would be repeated for each property.

Once your network contact clicks the "submit" button an e-mail will automatically be sent to you with all of the information from the form. The results can be sent in a text format.

The text format will allow you to import the information from the form directly into your Master Lead Log. Yes, you can do this. Always

automate whenever you can. Your contact has already entered the information, why should you enter it again?

You should then send your network contact an e-mail to confirm receipt of the information. You can actually have your website e-mail system set up to automatically send the conformation (I will cover the specifics later). This will save you a great deal of time.

Encourage all of your contacts to use your online lead submission form, wow that sounds impressive, doesn't it? Now that's how business is done in the 21st century.



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Property Analysis Form

Speaking of forms, why not set your Property Analysis Form up on your website as an online form? This will be for Motivated Sellers who may have received one of your business cards, or seen one of your other forms of advertising. The Sellers will visit your website and complete the Property Analysis Form online.

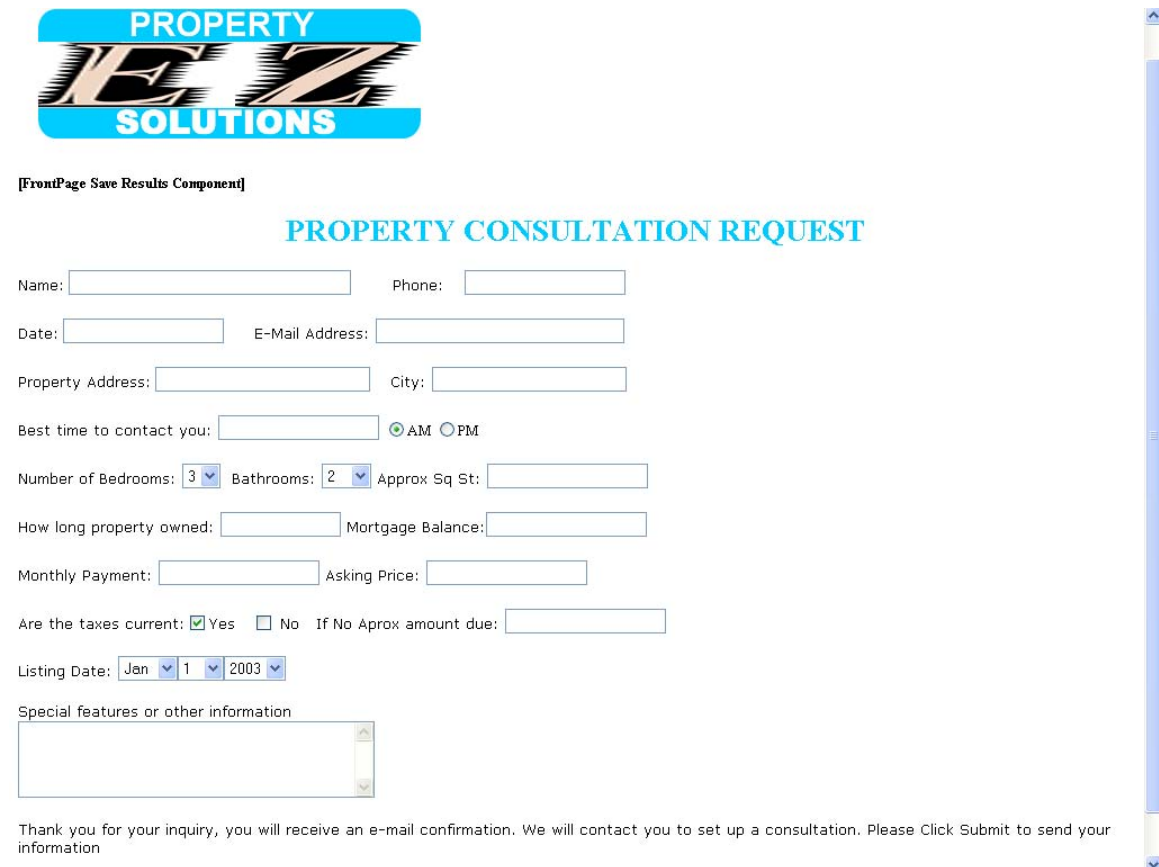
Your website will act as your Administrative Assistant....



... and gather all of the information from the Motivated Sellers.

Since this form is for the Seller's use don't call it a Property Analysis Form. Instead call it a "Property Consultation Request". This sounds a little more Seller friendly.

On your home page there will be a button to click for a "Free Consultation". Many people will actually prefer the online submission method. It's a little less intimidating than calling a stranger and having to explain their problems. Let's see what your online form might look like.



PROPERTY CONSULTATION REQUEST

Name: Phone:

Date: E-Mail Address:

Property Address: City:

Best time to contact you: ☒ AM ☐ PM

Number of Bedrooms: Bathrooms: Approx Sq St:

How long property owned: Mortgage Balance:

Monthly Payment: Asking Price:

Are the taxes current: ☒ Yes ☐ No If No Aprox amount due:

Listing Date:

Special features or other information

Thank you for your inquiry, you will receive an e-mail confirmation. We will contact you to set up a consultation. Please Click Submit to send your information

Figure 6 - Sample Property Consult Form

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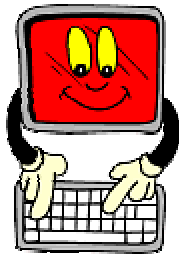
The online form actually captures a little more information than the Property Analysis Form. It includes a contact time that your Investor can use to set up an appointment.

Some of the fields are check boxes and drop down menus to make filling out the form quicker. **Add any functionality** that you can, which increases user friendliness.

The submit button is not in view. This form functions the same way as your online Lead Submission Form. The results are e-mailed to you and you would follow up with a confirmation e-mail, which hopefully you had generated automatically.

Once the data is received you can follow up with the Seller directly or pass the lead on to one of your Investors.

Your website can actually be....

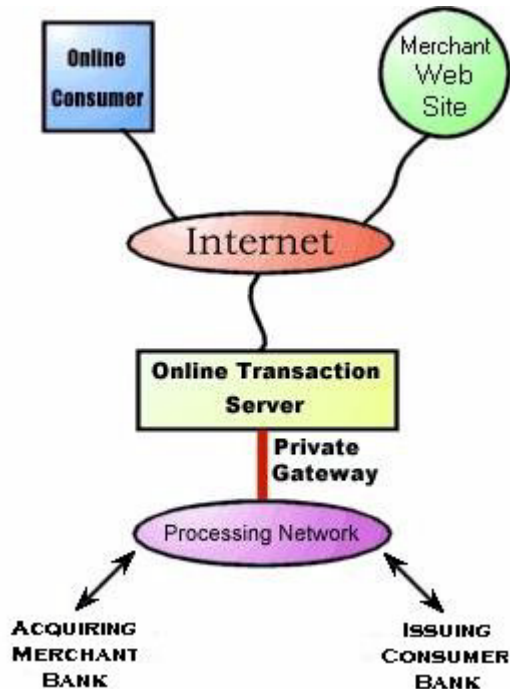


... your happiest and hardest working employee (except for you of course) if you **maximize its capabilities**.

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E-commerce

Electronic commerce is the method by which financial transactions take place via credit cards on the Internet. Let's take a look at how E-commerce works.



The consumer connects to the Internet and visits a business' website. The consumer then decides to make a purchase with her credit card. The credit card information is passed through a [Secure Socket Layer](#) (SSL) online transaction server, which encrypts the data to assure the consumer's security. The transaction then moves to the processing network, where the funds are taken from the consumer's account and transferred to the business' account. That's pretty simple, right?

The ability to accept credit cards is obviously a necessity for selling consumer goods over the Internet. There are also some advantages to your Jobber business being able to accept credit card payments over the Internet.

- ✓ **Expands Options** – your Investors can pay your referral fees at your website using a credit card.

- ✓ **Security** – when the transaction is processed the funds are guaranteed, no waiting for a check to clear or bounce.
- ✓ **Convenience** – it is certainly easier to pay via credit card, and it would save you a trip to pick up a check and then another trip to your bank to deposit it.
- ✓ **Availability** – your Investor can pay you anytime night or day, it essentially lengthens the day. If your Investor is out of town he can still pay you.
- ✓ **Cash Flow** – credit cards can stretch an Investor's cash flow. It could possibly allow for you to be paid quicker, the Investor would not have to wait for the proceeds from the sale.
- ✓ **Record Keeping** – an electronic record is generated on each transaction for both the Investor and the Jobber.
- ✓ **Multiple Streams of Income** – you can use your website to create multiple streams of income. We will cover multiple streams of income later.

The major disadvantage is the fact that **there are fees involved**. Depending on the situation it could be worth the fees incurred to receive your referral fee payments by credit card.

You may even want to consider building this into your referral fee rate, for instance set your fee at \$525 instead of \$500. We will discuss the **merchant account** fees in detail later.

Usually the more options you are able to offer the more successful you will be.

Customer Service



Your website can **actually serve as your customer service department**. When you start your Jobber business most likely it will be in your spare time, since you won't quit your job right away. Your website is one of your MVE – most valuable employees, it will work for you 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

You can post a **frequently asked questions** page specific to each of your customer groups, which are Motivated Sellers, your Network Contacts and your Investors. Eventually you'll know the most common questions and have them pre-answered on your website.

When you get a new question simply post the question and answer to your website.

We have already discussed how all three of your customer groups can benefit from your website's customer service department. Guess what? You can now spend more of your time finding leads, and let your website handle the routine customer service matters.

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Advertising



I guarantee **your website will be the most cost effective advertising tool** you can have. By simply including your website address on all of your promotional materials; you will provide a plethora of information about your business to your customers.

This information can include services offered, frequently asked questions, your qualifications and so on, and so on, and so on.

Have you priced a yellow pages ad lately? Well I can tell you, to get this type of advertising in the yellow pages you would have to take out a mortgage to pay for it!

A website is still relatively inexpensive to set up and operate, if you know what resources to use.

Don't worry I've done the research for you and by the end of this volume you will know exactly what to do.

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Set's Your Business Apart



A website will put your business ahead of the pack. As I mentioned earlier, a website is not yet a prevalent business tool in the real estate investing world.

You will stand out as one of the few doing business the way it should be done in the 21st century. Don't be surprised if others look to you as an expert, and seek your advice for their website!

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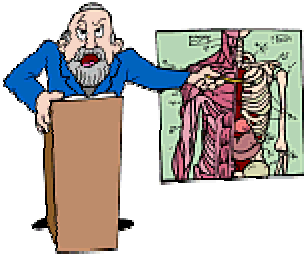
While a website won't give you four more arms, as a business tool it can be invaluable to you. It will definitely allow you do several things at once, and can automate part of your business processes. This can even be done during the early stages of your business.

I hope this section answered your question of “**how can a website help my Jobber business**”, and shed some light on how you can operate your Jobber business in the digital age.

Next we will break down the anatomy of a website, and help you get a better understanding of the components and lingo.

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THE ANATOMY OF A WEBSITE



Well I didn't really mean that kind of anatomy, but let's continue.

You now understand that business in the 21st century will increasingly be conducted through the Internet, and that your website can be your most valuable business tool.

We also discussed in great detail why the Internet is increasingly growing in popularity, and will be a business mainstay for the foreseeable future.

In the last chapter you learned how a website can help your Jobber business immensely while adding tremendous functionality. In summary, you know why you should have a website and how it can help you. But, you may be wondering what exactly is a business website?

Most people know that websites are found on the Internet and that you can click and buy. But very few actually understand what makes the site tick, let alone understand what it takes to create and operate a website.

We'll that's next, let's call it "**Website Anatomy 101**".

What Makes Up a Website?

Just like in the human body, **there are numerous components that make a website** do all of the things that it needs to do, in order to benefit your business.

Be aware, **there are many misleading advertisements** that will steer you wrong. You must understand all of the pieces involved to make an informed decision.

I will cover everything you'll need to know to set up, and be able to operate a website for your Jobber business. I will explain each component in detail and give some general price ranges, based on months of research and visiting hundreds of websites.

A website is basically a collection of files stored in your computer or on a host server. Just like you find in Microsoft's Windows explorer, the files are organized in folders. Each page of the website is simply a file that you have created. Let's take a peak at a website's file structure.

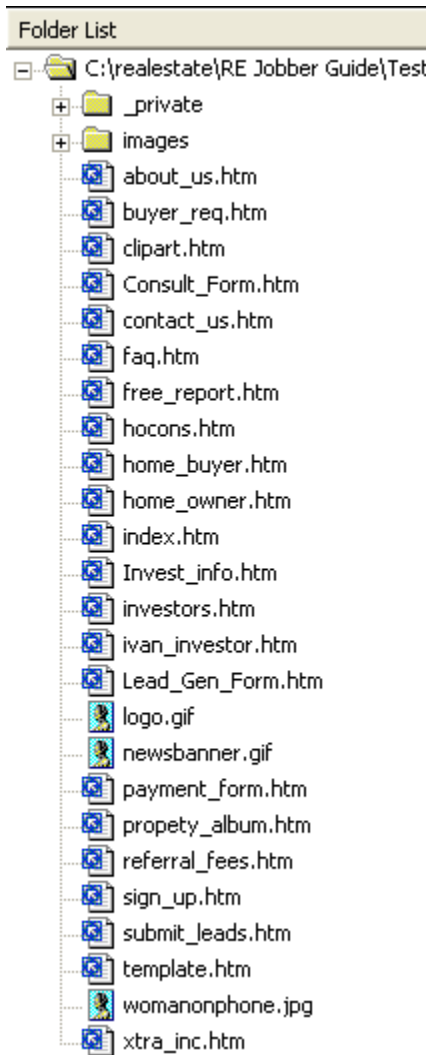


Figure 7 - Sample Website File Structure

The files that end with .htm are web pages. The files that end with .gif are images. If you can work with the "Windows Explorer" or "My Computer" feature you will have no trouble with website files.

Okay let's get started.

How Does My Website Get to The Internet?

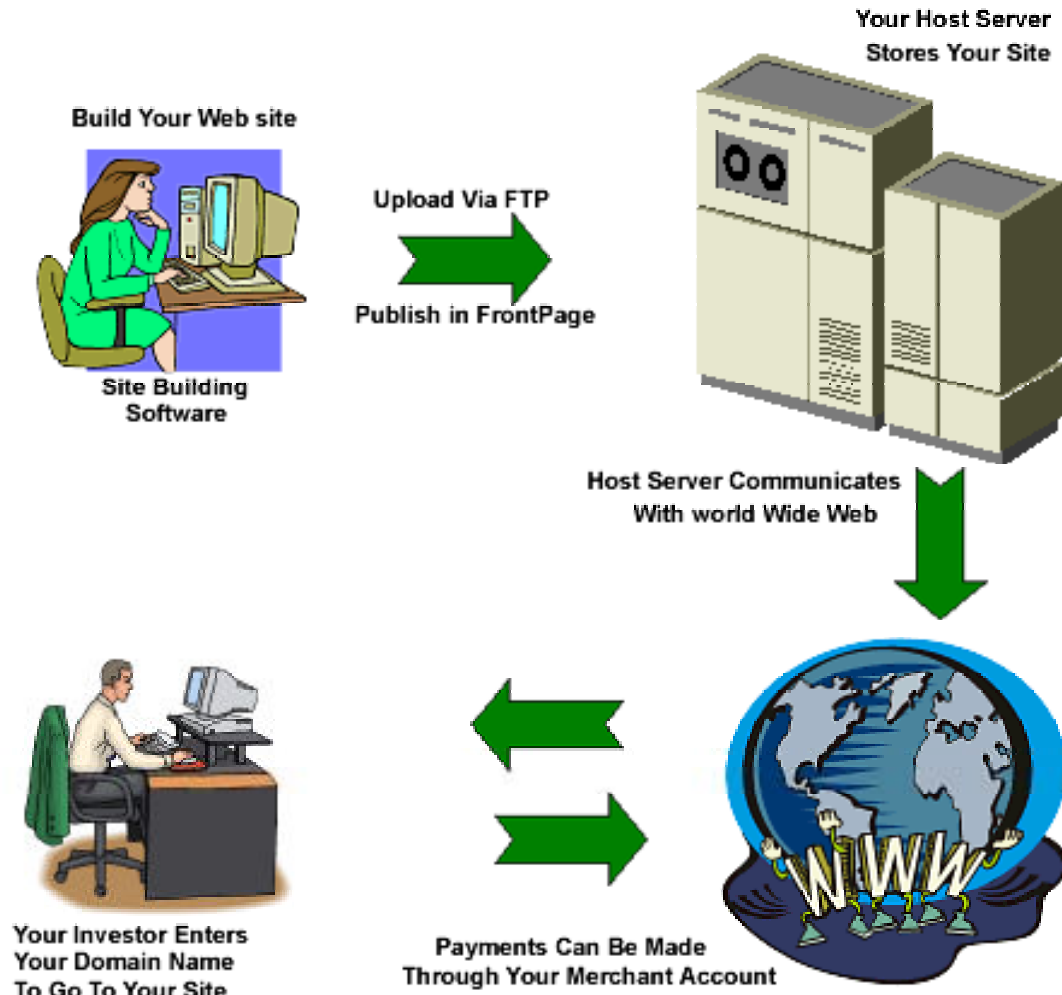
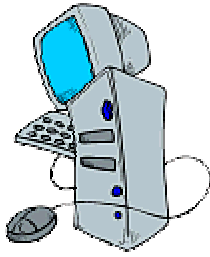


Figure 8 - How Websites Get to the Internet

You can refer to this diagram throughout the anatomy section to see how the components work together.

Your Computer System



You don't need a state of the art system to build a website. If your system is a couple of years old it should do just fine. Once your business is established you may want to upgrade to a more powerful system.

A system is basically comprised of the CPU, monitor, keyboard and mouse. Your computer is where your website begins. That's right you can create a website at home on your little old computer.



If you already have a computer start with it for now, it will probably do the trick for a while. The only upgrade I would recommend would be to a high speed Internet connection, if available in your area.

This can be accomplished through your local telephone company ([DSL connection](#)), your local cable TV company ([cable modem](#)), and sometimes through a satellite TV provider.

You will spend a lot of time on the Internet and the connection speed difference is definitely worth the \$40 -\$50 per month, and it's tax deductible. Look at it this way; you won't need an extra phone line,

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which is about \$20 a month and you won't need a separate ISP such as AOL or MSN that's another \$22 a month. There's your cost benefit analysis.

If you plan to buy a new computer, then anything on the market will easily do the job. Do some comparison-shopping and check out the warranties.



You can do some quick online comparison-shopping at <http://www.bizrate.com>. Below is a screen shot of some system comparisons.

The screenshot shows the BizRate.com website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like "Welcome", "Electronics", "Computer Hardware", "Computer Software", "Home & Garden", "Travel & Leisure", "Music", "DVD/Video", and "See All Departments". Below this is a search bar with the text "500 matches for '\$500 to \$1000000' Desktop Computers". To the left of the search results is a sidebar with a "Search" section containing a dropdown menu for "Desktop Computers", a "Price Range" input field set to "500" to "1000000", and a "Go!" button. Below the search section is a "Browse" section with links for "Recently Viewed Items", "Top Searches", "More Top Sellers", "All Departments", "Computer Hardware", and "Desktop Computers". At the bottom of the sidebar is a "Processor Type" section with links for "Pentium III", "Pentium 4", "Celeron", "Pentium II", "Pentium III Xeon", "Pentium II Xeon", and "PowerPC G3". The main content area displays a table of search results with columns for "Product Information", "Rating", "Lowest Price", and a "Go!" button. The table lists four items: 1. Dell Dimension 4550, 2. Sony VAIO PCV-RX860, 3. Dell Dimension 8250, and 4. Apple iMac G4 Superdrive. Each item includes a small image of the computer, its specifications, a star rating, the lowest price, and a "Go!" button.

	Product Information	Rating	Lowest Price	
1	 Dell Dimension 4550 Pentium 4 - 2.4 GHz - 120 GB HD - 128 MB RAM - Windows XP Home Edition	★★★★☆ (6 reviews)	\$958.00	Go!
2	 Sony VAIO PCV-RX860 Pentium 4 - 2.4 GHz - 80 GB HD - 512 MB RAM - Windows XP Home Edition	★★★★☆ (2 reviews)	\$1000.00	Go!
3	 Dell Dimension 8250 Pentium 4 - 2.4 GHz - 30 GB HD - 256 MB RAM - Windows XP Home Edition	—	\$1258.00	Go!
4	 Apple iMac G4 Superdrive PowerPC G4 - 800 MHz - 60 GB HD - 256 MB RAM - DVD-R, CD-RW - Apple Mac OS X, Apple Mac OS 9.2	★★★★★ (26 reviews)	\$1494.00	Go!

Figure 9 - BizRate.com Website

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You simply click on the system you're interested in, and you'll get a list of dealers that sell the machine. Most importantly there are customer reviews for each system and merchant.

Of course you do not have to buy your system online, but it's a quick and easy way to do research. Not all systems include monitors so make sure you verify that a monitor is included.

I use the Sony VAIO PCV-RX551 Pentium 4, and it has served me wonderfully for the past two years. If you are a member of one of the warehouse clubs such as Sam's Club, Costco or BJ's Warehouse, you can also get some great deals there.

Always buy as much computer as you can afford, because technology changes everyday. The more powerful your computer, the longer it will be able to serve your needs.

Other important components are as follows.

- ✓ **A 17-inch or larger monitor** is nice when designing web pages. You will be staring at the screen quite a bit, and the larger viewing area will be easier on your eyes. You can comparison shop at bizrate.com for monitors.
- ✓ **A printer** is also needed. You can also comparison shop at bizrate.com for printers. The multifunction units are good choices since they also act as a scanner, a fax machine and copier. Ink jets are less expensive and produce some very high color quality.

- ✓ A digital camera is your best bet for taking pictures for your website. They work like the standard camera's except there is no film. The image is stored in the camera's memory and then can be uploaded to your computer.

You can use a regular camera and have the film developed. Many developers will give your pictures to you on a disk, which can then be uploaded to your website.

Another choice is to scan the pictures into your computer. You can comparison shop at bizrate.com for digital cameras.

- ✓ You should have virus protection software installed on your system. Your software will need to be updated regularly to protect against as many viruses as possible. Norton and McAfee are among the industry leaders.

Most new systems will already have virus protection installed. The updates are obtained online. I set my virus protection software to automatically get updates daily. One little virus can knock out your whole system. You can comparison shop at bizrate.com for virus protection software.

- ✓ In case you do get a virus or encounter some other disaster you need a way to backup your files. The

easiest way is with a CD burner; simply copy your vital files to a CD.

It's prudent to make two copies one can be stored at your home (preferably in a fire proof box) and the other should be stored offsite. A bank **safe deposit box** is an excellent place to store an extra copy of your backup.

I experienced an unrecoverable hard drive failure last year. None of my data could be restored. My back up CD saved the day. While I did not have everything backed up, my most important files were saved!

In addition to CDs I now use a Maxtor 120 gigabyte external hard drive to back up my data. It connects to my PC via the USB port. I can then copy my entire hard drive to the external hard drive, and all of my data is safely backed up. I can also connect my laptop to the external drive to share files. It was about \$200 and well worth it.

Another popular choice is a **zip** drive, which uses disks similar to your standard floppy disk, but they are a little thicker (see picture below), and store up to 250 megabytes (MB) of data. A couple of zip disks are shown below.



Memory sticks are another alternative. These are very small and portable devices that can be used for backing up data. You can get a 128 MB memory stick for about \$30. This is extremely handy for carrying data with you and can be plugged into most any computer. A memory stick is shown below.



Tape drives have been around for a long and are a very effective way to back up your data. The tapes are easy to store off site and hold a lot of data. However, they remain very expensive. Decent tape drive back up units start at about \$600 and the tapes can run in excess of \$50 each.

You can comparison shop at bizrate.com for backup storage devices.

- ✓ A battery back up is also a good idea. It not only protects against power outages, but also adds extra surge protection. If you lose power the battery will

give you 5 to 10 minutes to properly shut down your computer. You can comparison shop at bizrate.com for battery backups.

Obviously **your computer system is very important to your website**. Be sure to follow all of the safe guards to protect your business. Remember you don't need a brand new computer to get started, but you should invest in a more powerful machine when you are able.

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Website Development Software



Now you have your system all set up and ready to go, but how do you build a website. Let's start with a little background. At one time websites were built exclusively by writing **HTML** (Hyper Text Markup Language) code, which required the skills of a professional programmer.

HTML is still the basis for websites. There is now an alphabet soup of other codes that go along with HTML including, **XML**, **JAVA**, **ASP**, **CSS** and so on. However, they are way out of the scope of this book.

There are now software programs, which write the HTML code for you and work basically like a word processor. You type in the text you want, format it, and insert pictures just like you would in your favorite word processor. You can also create forms like we saw earlier.

There are hundreds of [website design software](#) packages on the market. I will talk about the two I'm most familiar with and are generally considered the top of the line.

I use **FrontPage by Microsoft** for most of my website design. It's very easy to use and the interface looks very similar to MS Word. There are [wizards](#) which actually walk you through a complete website design, and all you do is add your content.

Your website is created on your PC and when it's ready you simply "[publish it to the Internet](#)". It's then stored on your [host server](#) (we will discuss hosting shortly). You make updates to the website on your PC, and again publish the changes when you are ready.

Your website is now updated with your changes. Let's take a peek inside of FrontPage

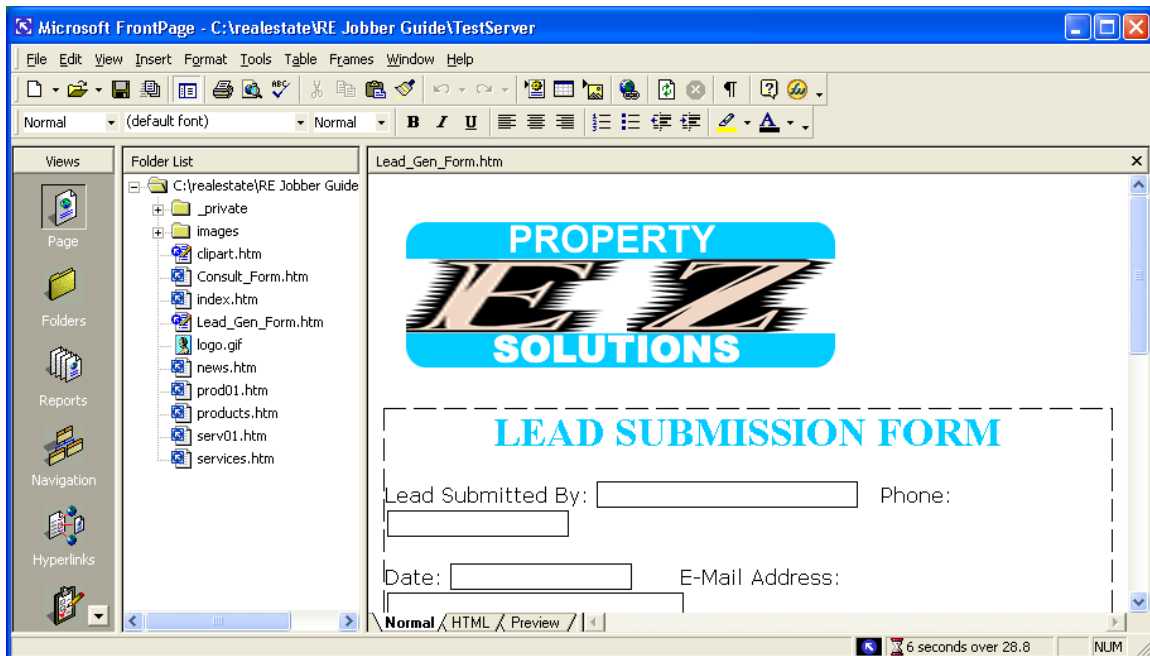


Figure 10 - FrontPage 2000 User Interface

The folder list contains all of the website files. As we saw earlier, the web pages are all files that have the ".htm" extension and the graphics are ".gif" extensions. There are already several pages created, including the forms we looked at earlier. There is only one graphic at this time, the logo (logo.gif). **The index.htm is always the home page of the website.**

FrontPage also allows HTML programming to be incorporated into your site. So if you want to add some special HTML coding, it's just a matter of copying the code and pasting it in the HTML tab.

FrontPage is a great package for learning website development, and you can use the more sophisticated features as your skills grow. Some of the HTML code for the Submission Form is shown below.

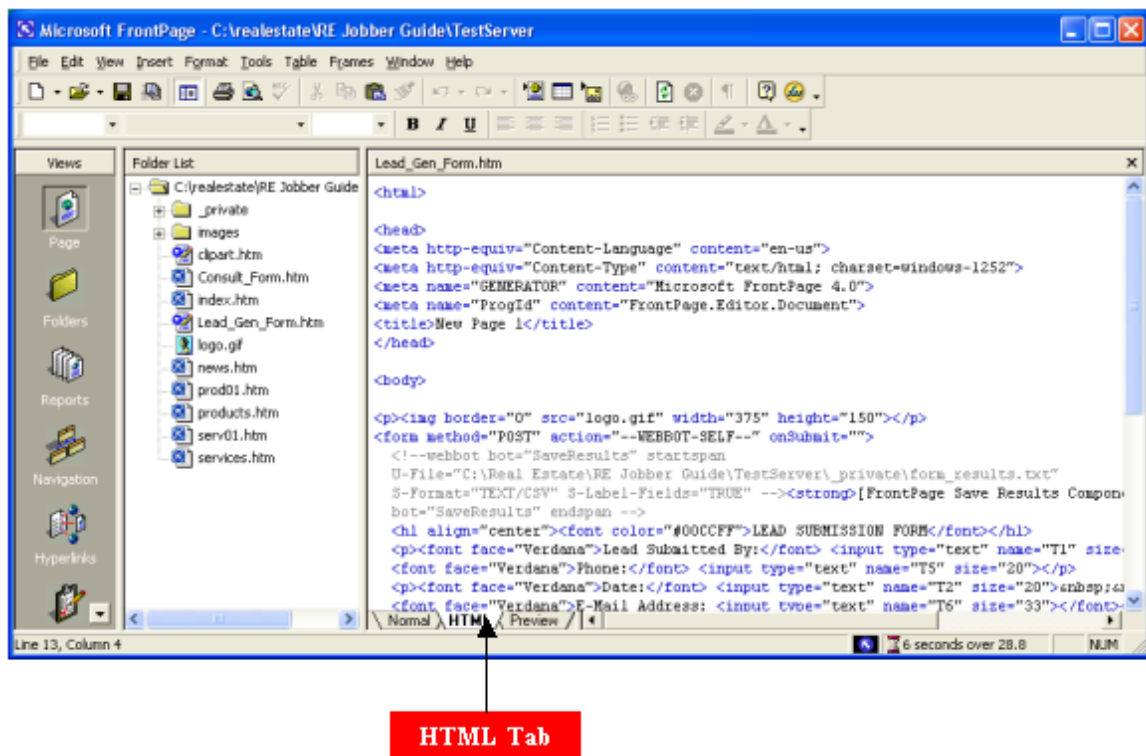


Figure 11 - Sample FrontPage HTML Code

Aren't you glad you won't have to write this code to build your website?

You can find several good books at Amazon to help you get started. FrontPage runs approximately \$180 at <http://www.amazon.com>.



Dreamweaver MX by Macromedia is another popular choice for web page design. It's a little more robust than FrontPage and offers support for some very advanced features. You can easily design a basic website with Dreamweaver, much like you would with FrontPage.

There is a difference in the way you publish your website. You would have to use an [FTP](#) (File Transfer Protocol) program to upload the website to your host server. [FTP](#) basically works like your Internet Explorer Tool. You copy the files from your computer to your host server each time you want to update the site.

As you can see in the screen shot below, the FTP program has two screens. The left side contains the website files on your PC. The right side is your host server.

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Simply highlight the website files that you want to upload from your PC. In the example the first four files are highlighted and will be [uploaded](#). You then click on the upload arrow. The files are transferred to your [host server](#) and the website is updated.

You can also use the “**drag and drop**” technology. Click your mouse on the files to move. Hold down the left mouse button and drag the files to the FTP screen and release the button. The files are now uploaded to the server.

Publishing is a little more involved than FrontPage, but it’s still relatively easy with a little practice.

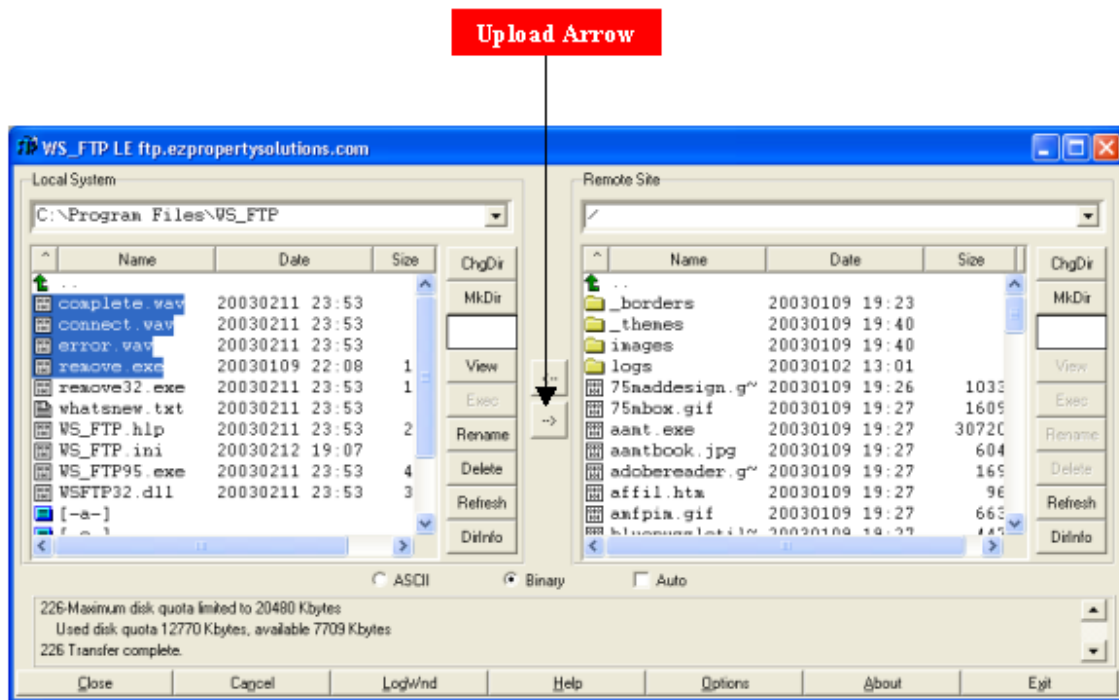


Figure 12 - Sample FTP User Interface

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FTP programs are freely available and can be used for most web publishing software. I use WS-FTP LE 5.08; you can download it free at:

<http://www.tucows.com/preview/195136.html>.

The Dreamweaver user interface is shown below.

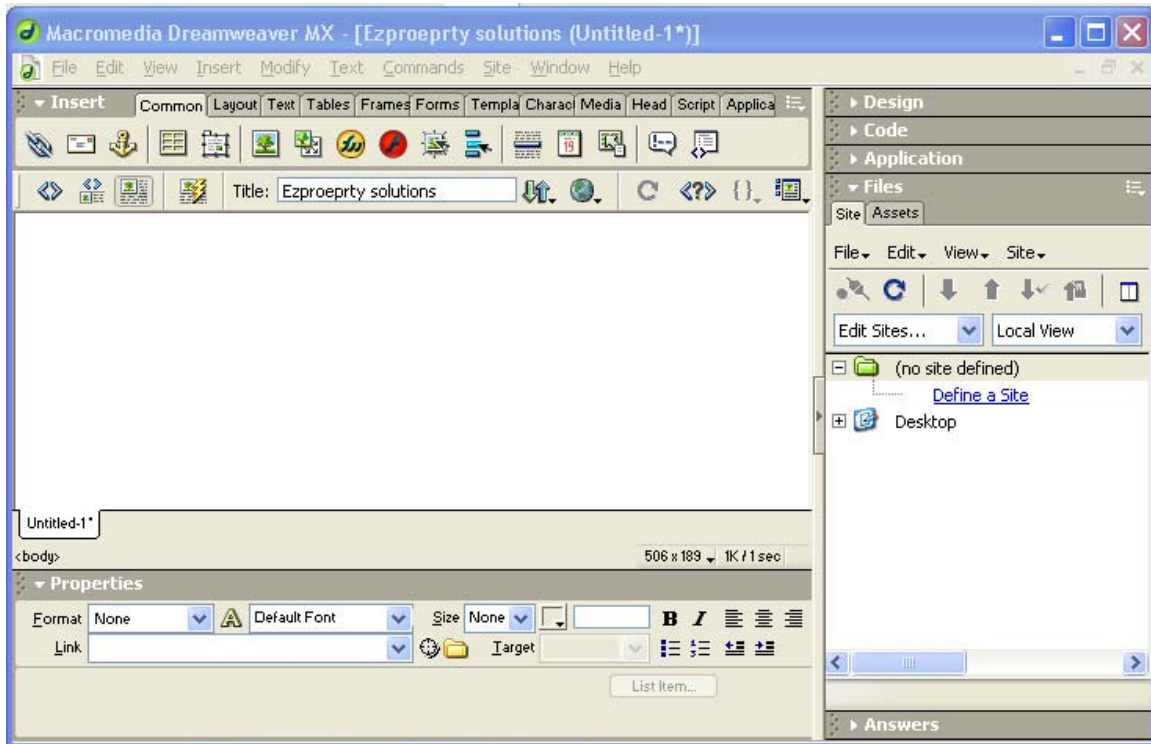


Figure 13 - Dreamweaver MX User Interface

Dreamweaver is a more expensive package and will cost about \$390. As with FrontPage, there are several good books on Dreamweaver available at Amazon to help you get started.



You can download a free trial version of Dreamweaver MX at:

http://www.macromedia.com/software/trial_download/

If you can't purchase FrontPage or Dreamweaver right away, then I would suggest selecting a [hosting company](#) that provides a page-building tool. This will allow you to build your initial website, then when you're ready you can easily switch to FrontPage or Dreamweaver.

Believe me when you get the hang of website building, you will want one of the professional packages. So don't waste your money on inferior products, use the freebies until you're ready.

The [page building](#) tools supplied by most hosting companies have to be worked on over the Internet. So the files will not reside on your PC, but will be stored on your host server. You will update your site online and then [publish](#) the changes.

These tools usually have limited functionality, **but will work just fine to begin your website**. They should have several templates to choose from, and you simply choose the color theme and enter your name, phone number etc. Then it's just a matter of adding your content.

Your major task will be uploading pictures for your Investors to view, which most of these tools can handle just fine. You will probably have to wait to create your interactive forms until you purchase one of the packages we discussed earlier.

But **your site will be up and running** and you can improve it, customize it and grow it along with your business.

I don't write HTML code, but I did spend a weekend learning the basics. It helped a lot. Check for beginner level HTML books at Amazon that will give you a good overview.

Website Graphics

Graphic packages allow you to create and manipulate images for your website. They are commonly used to create banners, animations, logos, advertisements etc. You should not need a graphics package at this stage.

There are all kinds of studies that have indicated fancy graphics and animations **distract visitors from the message** of your website. Most professional websites have very limited graphics. The best graphic to use at this point would be a picture of you, with a welcome message. This helps instill trust in your Investors and other customers.

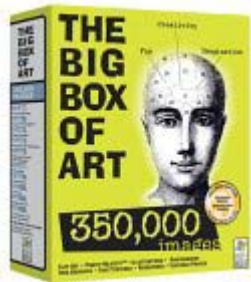
The only other images on your site should be the pictures of your property leads. If you want to include a tasteful graphic on your forms there are several places to get free clipart.

<http://dgl.microsoft.com/>

<http://www.freegraphics.com/>

<http://www.eclipsed.com/>

Another great source of clipart is Hemera's "The Big Box of Art"; it contains 350,000 pieces of clipart, photos and animation images. It has almost any type of image imaginable. The price is about \$30.



When you are ready to do a little more design work, then I recommend **Macromedia's Fireworks**. Fireworks MX allows you to customize clipart images for your own use.

You can add text to create a logo, combine several images into one image, and perform a multitude of other fancy functions.

This is the software that many professional web graphic designers use. Don't worry it's designed for the novice to use also. There's a great tutorial that comes with it. Fireworks cost approximately \$300. However, you can download a free trial version.

http://www.macromedia.com/software/trial_download/



You can purchase both "The Big Box of Art" and Fireworks MX at Amazon.



There are two types of graphic files that you will use on your website, [Graphical Interchange Format](#) (gif) and [Joint Photo Graphic Expert Group](#) (jpeg) images.

Gif files are the cartoon like images that you see throughout the course. By the way I use the Big Box of Art.

Jpegs are photographs for the most part, and have a file extension of .jpg.



If your graphic comes in another format, you will need a program like Fireworks to convert them to a .gif or .jpg file format. Images from your digital camera are already in the jpg format. Your scanner should be able to create either format.

Merchant Account



[Merchant accounts](#) are used to accept credit card payments from consumers. Retail stores must have merchant accounts to accept credit card payments, and so must you for your website. A [merchant account](#) simply helps facilitate the transfer of funds from the consumer to your bank account.

When your Investor clicks the “pay here” button there is actually a lot of activity taking place behind the scenes.

The credit card information is passed through a [Secure Socket Layer](#) (SSL) online transaction server, which encrypts the data to assure security. The transaction then moves to the processing network, where the funds are taken from the Investor’s account and transferred to your account.

Remember our diagram from earlier?

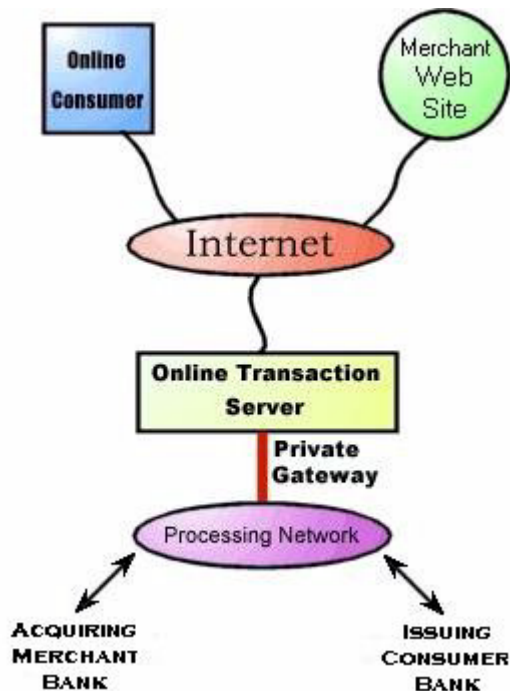


Figure 14 - Website Transaction Process

Getting a merchant account is not always easy for a website. Unless you have good credit, a large deposit may still be required. You have to be very careful when selecting a merchant account; there are a lot of questionable deals out there.

I'm including a chart of several merchant account providers and the cost involved with each. As you will see **it can be quite expensive to have a merchant account.**

The chart contains 8 columns:

Merchant Account Provider – this is the company providing the merchant account. I have removed the names of the companies. My purpose for this chart is to let you know the different fees and the charges to look out for, not to slam any particular merchant account provider.

Real Time Solution Price – basically a one time set-up fee to allow your website to accept credit card payments.

Gateway Fee – a monthly fee for your transactions to be processed through the private gateway. See the diagram above.

Statement Fee – believe it or not some companies will charge you a monthly fee to generate a statement of your account's activity.

Monthly Minimum – the minimum amount of monthly charges you must have in order to avoid a penalty.

Discount Rate – the percentage of your charge amount that you pay for your merchant service. For instance a discount rate of 2.4% means that for a \$100 sale, the merchant account provider will subtract out \$2.40 ($100 \times .024$) before transferring the funds to your account.

Transaction Fee – the charge to process each of your credit card transactions. To continue with our example from above, a single \$100 sale would cost you \$2.40 + .35 transaction fee = \$2.75. So you would receive a transfer to your account in the amount of \$97.25 ($100 - 2.75$) for your \$100 sale.

Tech Support Fee – that's right some companies will actually charge you to provide support and answer questions.

Here's the data for your review.

Merchant Account Provider	Real-Time Solution Price	Gateway Fee	Statement Fee	Monthly Minimum	Discount Rate	Transaction Fee	Tech. Support Fee
	\$299	\$10/month	\$10/month	\$25/month	2.40%	\$0.35	Fee not disclosed
	\$195	\$15/month	\$10/month	\$25/month	2.35%	\$0.30	\$0/month

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	\$499	\$30/month	\$10/month	\$15/month	2.35%	\$0.25	\$0/month
	\$49.95	\$19.95/month	\$5/month	Fee not disclosed	2.31% + 1.25 Intl.	\$0.13 (Rates vary) + Interchange	Fee not disclosed \$12 chargeback fee
	\$179	\$14.95/month	\$9.95/month	\$25/month	2.29%	\$0.30	Fee not disclosed
	\$169	\$10/month	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	2.19% (Rates vary)	\$0.23	Fee not disclosed
	\$174.99 w/cart	Reseller for Nova (Call for Quote)	\$5.95	Reseller of Nova (Call for Quote)	2.01% (Rates vary)	\$0.38	\$9.99 (Shopping Cart Fee)
	\$394	\$0/month	\$6/month	\$30/month	2.17% (Rates vary)	\$0.30	\$10/month
	\$249 (Limit 1000 transactions then 10 cents per)	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	\$59.95/mo
	\$99	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	2.35%	\$0.30	\$39/month
	Fee not disclosed	\$19.95/month	\$10/month	\$25/month	2.29%	\$0.30	Fee not disclosed
	\$99.90 + 49.95 on 2nd month	Fee not disclosed	\$15/month + annual and overlimit fees	Fee not disclosed	2.39% + \$0.10 for certain t.	\$0.30	\$59.95/month + \$25 chargeback fee
	\$359	Fee not disclosed	\$9/month	\$20/month	2.30%	\$0.30	\$0/month
	Fee not disclosed	\$10/month	\$10/month	Fee not disclosed	2.29%	\$0.35	Fee not disclosed
	\$345	\$20/month	\$10/month	Fee not disclosed	1.99% (Rates vary)	\$0.35	Fee not disclosed (\$25 annual fee)
	\$149	\$15/month	\$5/month	\$25/month	2.25% (Rates vary)	\$0.30	Fee not disclosed
	\$399	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	\$50/month	3.25% (Rates vary)	\$0.40	\$50/month
	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	Fee not disclosed	\$15/month	2.29%	\$0.30	\$49.95/month + \$15 chargeback fee
	\$50	\$29.95/month	\$10/month	Fee not disclosed	2.35%	\$0.30	Fee not disclosed

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	\$595	\$15/month	\$10/month	\$25/month	2.29%	\$0.30	Fee not disclosed
	Fee not disclosed	\$15/month	\$10/month	\$10/month	2.28% (Rates vary)	\$0.45	Fee not disclosed Annual fee \$29
	\$295.95	\$49.95/mo Cart incl.	\$10/month	\$0/month	2.25% (Rates vary)	\$0.30	Fee not disclosed
	\$49.95	Fee not disclosed	\$10/month	Fee not disclosed	2.39%	\$0.29	Fee not disclosed
	\$150-498	\$19/month	\$10/month	\$10/month	2.25 - 2.85%	\$0.30 \$25 Chargebk	Fee not disclosed. Annual fee \$29
	Fee not disclosed	\$15/month	\$10-12/mo	\$10/month	2.47%	\$0.30	Fee not disclosed.
	\$175	\$25/month	Fee not disclosed.	Fee not disclosed.	2.95%	\$0.35	Fee not disclosed.
	\$300-600 +App Fee	\$25/month	\$10/month	\$25/month	2.50%	\$0.35	Annual Fee sometimes applies.

As you can see the fees cover the entire spectrum. There are also other hidden charges you have to watch out for. Here are a few:

- ✓ Chargeback fees
- ✓ Retrieval fees
- ✓ Termination fees
- ✓ Gateway Per Item fees
- ✓ Hidden setup charges
- ✓ Non-refundable setup charges
- ✓ Batch fees
- ✓ Cancellation fees
- ✓ Pass through fees
- ✓ Over limit fees
- ✓ Voice Authorization fees
- ✓ Voice AVS fees
- ✓ Non-Sufficient Funds fees

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- ✓ Bank Setup fees
- ✓ Daily Closeout fees
- ✓ Software fees
- ✓ Licensing Fees
- ✓ Annual fees

If you see any of these types of fees **run the other way**, because you are about to be ripped off. Be sure to inquire about hidden fees. I'm sure all of this information makes you a little bit nervous.

Don't worry I've done all of the research for you. **I'll have a merchant account solution for you later**, which has no software fees, no gateway fees, no statement fees, no minimum monthly requirements and no tech support fee.

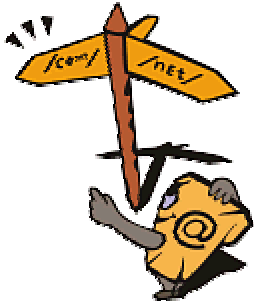
You will be able to accept Visa, Master Card, American Express and Discover. You will simply pay a small discount rate and 35 cents per transaction. There will be no surprises. That's the way it should be.

A merchant account is necessary to be able to accept credit cards on your website, and will be a big help when you become an Investor yourself.

You may be lease optioning a house, and the only way your perspective buyer can satisfy your down payment requirement is with a credit card. You want to keep all options open.

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Domain Name



"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet"

---William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*. Act ii. Sc. 2

Well I hate to disagree with Mr. Shakespeare, but that just isn't true for your domain name. What's a [domain name](#)? Good question, let's get to that right now.

Let me begin by saying do not accept one of those free website domain names. Free names usually look something like this: www.freesitename.com/stores/free/new/yourname.htm. You want a private domain name, www.yourname.com.

If you don't register a private domain name your business will not be taken seriously. You will not be seen, as a professional, and no one will want to visit your site, no matter how good it is. I will cover everything you need to know about domain names.

A [domain name](#) is your website's address on the Internet. It looks like this <http://www.realestatejobber.com/>. This is how people will find your website online.

A domain name actually points to a numbered [IP](#) (Internet Protocol) address, where your website is found. IP addresses are not easily

remembered. Could you imagine having to remember the IP Address 201.18.35.65 instead of www.realestateJobber.com?

The domain name adds a more human touch to accessing websites. Not to mention they are much more memorable and marketable.

Your Domain name is something that you will have to put a lot of thought into. You will want to pick a name that you can carry over from your Jobber business to your Investor business. Lets look at some things to take into consideration.

You should choose a name that reflects the type of service that you provide. I would stay clear of names like ABC **Investments**, or JLB **Properties**, or TLC **Bank Group**.

These names are impersonal and give the perception that you are only interested in lining your pockets, not solving their problems.

Instead think of including words like solutions, strategies, concepts, consulting, resource and services. Your name should indicate that you're interested in helping to solve their problems. Solving Problems should be one of your goals. Remember, **win-win**.

Your name should not be vague, misleading, hard to spell or sound bad to the ear. You need a name that describes what you do and is unique enough to set you apart. You want something catchy but not corny.

Here's a test. Tell someone your chosen domain name over the phone. Did you have to spell it, repeat it several times? Or worst yet, did you

have to use army code like saying Alfa instead A or Zebra instead of Z? If so go back to the drawing board.



I told you it would take some thought. Let's look a few **brick and mortar** names that are winners.

- ✓ Absolute Rubbish – a rural waste disposal company.
- ✓ Proclaim – a medical claim processing service
- ✓ Let's Do It Again Resale Fashions – a previously owned clothing store

The businesses above all choose names that set them apart from their competition, and were memorable, unique and sounds good to the ear.

Your domain name does not have to be your business name. Actually the opposite just might work for you. Let me explain. At this point you probably don't have a name for your business. **Why not consider naming your business after your domain name?**

It's far easier than trying to find a domain name that matches your business. If you follow the naming suggestions given in this volume your domain name will work perfectly as your business name.

Let's explore some naming methods that you can use for brainstorming your all important domain name.

1. **Your own name** – Joanne Jobber Enterprises – this works well for Charles Schwab, Ford, law firms and the

like. It's probably not the best choice for your Jobber business, at this time.

2. **Describe what you do** – Landscaping Supreme – this is a good method. Think of the key words in our business. Properties, investors, real estate, motivated, etc. Try working these words into your name. Then use a thesaurus to find similar words.
3. **The main benefit you provide** – No Mess Chimney Sweep – another excellent way to think of a domain name. Use the earlier suggestions of solutions, strategies, services etc.
4. **Describe your niche** – The Cheesecake Factory – this method is probably too limiting for your business. But if you think you can carve out a niche, then go for it.
5. **No meaning name** – Yahoo, EBay – again probably not the best choice for your business. You want your customers to know what your business does.
6. **Play on word names** – For Sale Buy Owner – these names will also work well, if you are clever enough to come up with something that's still professional.
7. **Geographical names** – Northwest Jobbers – can work well in some communities, when combined with something that describes your business. Try city, county and state names also.
8. **Trademark Names** – Nike – you will need a lot of promotion to make it recognizable. But it could work if combined with another method. For instance H2 Driving School.

Use all of these methods to brainstorm for that perfect name. You don't want to have to change your name when you become an Investor. After all you are building a rock solid reputation.

Domain Name Conventions

There are now several naming conventions for your domain name. What are naming conventions? Humm, you're full of good questions. They are the .com, .net and .org extensions that will be at the end of your domain name.

You should use .com as it's still the most recognizable on the web. Most people will just enter .com automatically. However, let's take a brief look at some other choices now available.

- ✓ .com – still the standard. Intended for commercial sites, but is widely used for all organizations.
- ✓ .net – used primarily by network providers.
- ✓ .org – used by non-profit organizations
- ✓ .biz – for general business, but has not caught on yet.
- ✓ .us – **country specific** top-level name for the USA, you won't need this.
- ✓ .ca – country specific top-level name for Canada.
www.business.ca
- ✓ .uk - specific top level name for the United Kingdom.
www.business.uk
- ✓ .info – no specific use, just another alternative, with more names currently available than .com.
- ✓ .tv – no specific use, just another alternative, with more names currently available than .com.

- ✓ .ws – website just another alternative, with more names currently available than .com.
- ✓ .cc – actually is country specific for Cocos Keeling Islands, but can be registered by anyone. Again another alternative, with more names currently available than. com.

Obviously a lot of these conventions **were created to offer more choices**, since many of the popular .com names were already registered. For instance business.com was taken many years ago. So now business.tv is available. But most people are still going to look for the .com name.

There is a misconception that all of the good .com names are already taken. If you use the techniques discussed earlier and come up with a truly unique and memorable name, there is a good chance it will be available as a .com. **Stick to .com and you'll do just fine.**

So you have the perfect name or several perfect names picked out. Now all you have to do is check and see if they are available. There is a great tool included with your Biz Toolz, called the **Domain Name Analyzer** (DNA). The DNA will allow you to enter several names and then lookup the availability. It will also help you find a name based on your key words.

I will check the availability of three .com domain names; let's try creativeprops.com, totalpropertyhelp.com and realestaterescue.com. The DNA program checks the availability and tells us that creativeprops.com is taken, totalpropertyhelp.com is available and realestaterescue.com is taken.

You can try combining some of your names. For instance I tried **totalpropertyrescue.com** and it was available.

Let's take a look at the DNA interface.

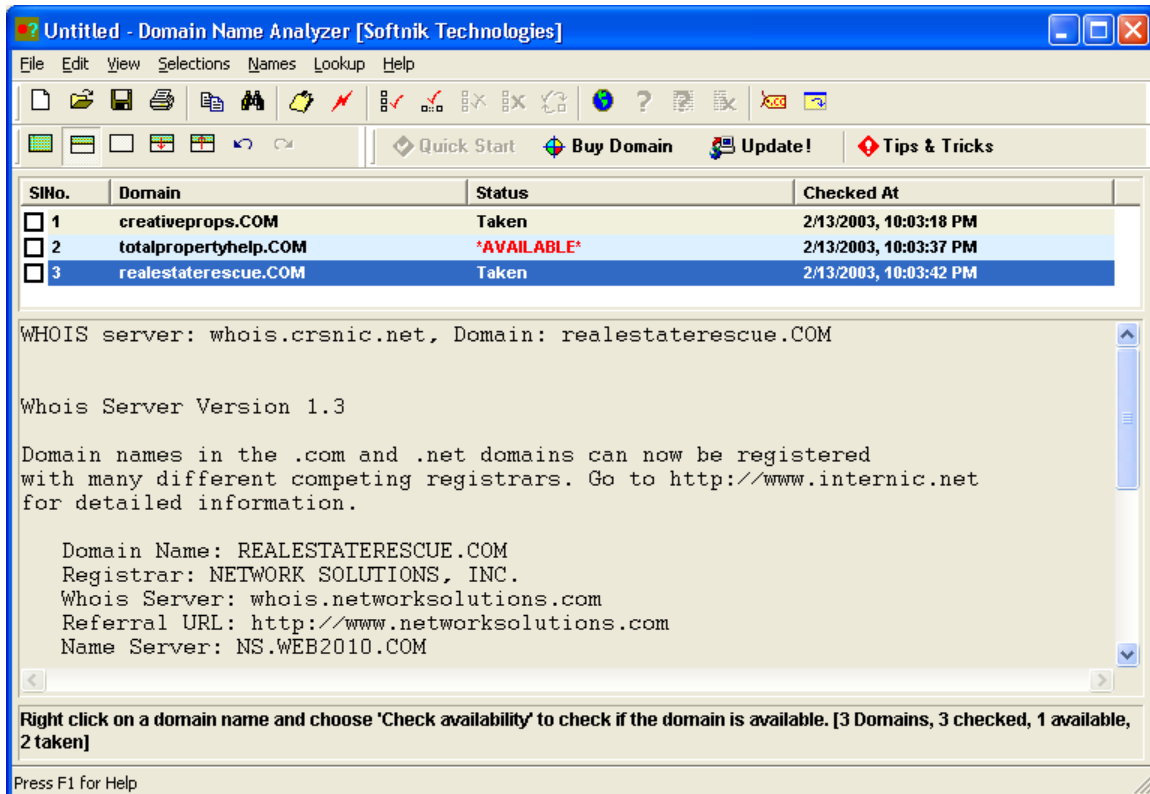


Figure 15 - Domain Name Analyzer Software Interface

Simply install the DNA program from your toolz and it's ready for action. You will also want to make sure the name you have chosen is not trademarked. Your DNA tool also has a trademark search function.

You can also conduct a free trademark search at the official US Patents and Trademark Office's website.

<http://www.uspto.gov/>

How do I buy a domain name?

Well actually you rent them by the year. There used to be only one source for registering a domain name. You had to pay \$70, and that would get you the name for two years.

Now there are hundreds of companies that will register your domain name. Prices range from \$9 to \$35 per year, and you can register up to 10 years at a time.

If you do not renew your name before it expires, then it goes back on the open market. So make sure you renew promptly or pay in advance for multiple years.

Not all of the lower cost companies are reliable. Similar to merchant accounts you have to be careful which domain name registering company you choose. Remember your domain name is an extremely important part of your website.

As with the [merchant account](#) I will have a recommendation that is head and shoulders above the rest and will assure your domain name is securely registered.

Other Domain Name Tips

Okay, we have covered domain names inside and out. I have a few final suggestions.

If you choose a name like totalpropertyrescue.com , which is a good name but a little hard to read. Advertise it as TotalPropertyRescue.com

to **make it easier to read**. Your customers can enter upper case or lower case letters, and will still be directed to your site.

Don't make your domain name too long. Even though you are permitted to have a name 63 characters long, don't over do it. For instance www.theworldsgreatestmotivatedsellersolutions.com is probably a bit to long.

Don't use hyphens or dashes. They are confusing and easily forgotten. Sometimes your customer may forget which words are hyphenated, or forget the hyphens altogether. They will have a very difficult time finding your website, and may end up at a competitor's site.

Don't mimic a popular name. This is not ethical and in many instance not legal. There was a local boat dealer who named his business Boats R Us and everything was fine for a couple of years.

You guessed it, Toys R Us got wind of the name, and took the dealer to court. While Toys R Us was kind enough not to seek punitive damages, the boat dealer still encountered thousands of dollars in expenses changing signs, ads and other business materials. Make a name for yourself and you will do much better.

Don't register someone else's name. **Cybersquatting** is unethical and possibly illegal. Don't run off and register the local elementary school basketball star's name. You may think he will make it to the NBA and pay you millions for the name. But you will likely lose in court.

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Now it's perfectly fine to register a name of something that you think will become valuable. Say for instance Real Estate Jobber, hey it's too late I already own that one!

Maybe you think old receipts will become valuable one day, so you register oldreceipts.com. If the term does become valuable then you can legally sell the name for a profit. **This really is investing in domain names.** By the way, oldreceipts.com is available if you're interested.

Register other versions of your name. As you can afford it, buy the .net, .org etc versions of your name. You don't want someone else trying to capitalize off your good name.

Register for the future. If you have plans of diversifying buy the appropriate names as soon as possible.

Don't pay a lot of money. It should never cost more than \$35 a year to register a domain name. I will have a solution much cheaper than that for you.

Make sure you spell your domain name correctly!

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Web Hosting Service

Let's have a quick website review. You now understand

- ✓ How a website can help your business
- ✓ The role your computer system plays
- ✓ How websites are created with development software
- ✓ How merchant accounts work

- ✓ How to choose and register a domain name

We are now left with the final piece of your website's anatomy, the [hosting service](#).

You're probably wondering what is a [hosting service](#)? What is its purpose? Why do I need one? All good questions, but let's take them one at a time.



Well it's not exactly like your restaurant host, but the concept is similar. A hosting company takes care of your website's files.

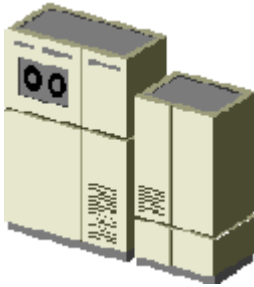
A web hosting service rents out web space on their [servers](#) that you typically pay for monthly. The purpose of a web hosting Service Company is to provide access to websites via the Internet. In order to operate a website you will need to have access to a server. Or you will have to get your own server.

Servers are very expensive to purchase. A great deal of technical knowledge is required for administration, maintenance and operation. Your time and money are better spent concentrating on your site. The obvious choice for most small businesses is to simply pay for hosting service.

As we saw earlier in the "[How Does My Website Get to the Internet](#)" diagram, your web building software writes your website in [HTML](#)

code. Your host server is then able to translate the code to the wonderful web pages that we see online.

Oh, you want to know what a server is? Well in the diagram it looks like this.



A server is actually just an extremely high-powered computer. The server usually has much higher quality components (high capacity disk space, extremely fast processor speeds, memory etc.) than your computer at home.

Like a restaurant host, this high-powered machine serves its customers. Except a computer server serves files to its client computers. Yes, a host server is serving your computer at home. Don't forget to tip. 😊

"Free" Hosting Services

My advice is the same as for the free domain names, don't use them.

If you are going to have an online presence make it professional. Free domain names and web hosting services are fine for personal websites, but are taboo for business.

The only way to have a truly free hosting service is to allow banner ads to appear on your site. The banner ad revenue pays for your

hosting. You usually have no say in what banners are displayed. Banners encourage people to click and leave your site. Why would you want that?

Another trick is to only allow you to have a very small amount of space or limit you to 3 or 5 pages. Also you may not be allowed to have pictures on your site. There are charges for customer support and down times are frequent. You can forget about adding forms or any other interactive devices.

So, how can you get what you need from a free service? Simple...you just **upgrade to one of their paid packages**. Features are then on a menu system such as, \$10 per month to remove ads, \$5 per month to add e-mail accounts, etc. So are they really free? Of course not... just like in a restaurant it takes money to pay for those servers.

What to Look for in a Hosting Service

Hosting services will make a lot of boastful claims, but **you have to be careful**. After all, this is where your website will be residing. Here are some considerations for your hosting service.

- ✓ **24 hour Customer Support** – You should have access to customer service whenever you need it. At a minimum e-mail support that can answer your questions within 24 hours should be available. Live chat services are a step above, as you can get your answers in real time. Of course toll free telephone support is the best, although it's rare.
- ✓ **Money-back Guarantee** – If you are not happy with the quality of your hosting service, can you get your money

back? The good services have no problem offering a 30-day money back guarantee.

- ✓ **99.9% Uptime Guarantee** – Are their servers down or not working for long periods of time? If the servers are down, that means no one can get to your website. Any company that advertises 100% uptime is probably exaggerating. There are bound to be times when upgrades and system changes will require some down time. The good companies make these changes during off peak hours.
- ✓ **Fast Connection Times** – They should have fiber optic T-3 lines. Don't worry about the technical jargon it's not important; it's just a measuring stick. Anything less will cause your customers to connect very slowly. If the connection takes too long, their computers will time them out. Guess what? They probably won't bother trying a second time.
- ✓ **High Levels of Bandwidth** – **Bandwidth** is the amount of information that flows from your server, in other words how much traffic can your site handle. I will explain bandwidth in detail later, as it is a very important part of your hosting service.
- ✓ **Future Growth** – will your Jobber business be able to grow and expand services with this hosting service? How much does additional web space cost? How much are additional e-mail accounts? How much is additional bandwidth? These are all issues you will face as your business grows.

- ✓ **Able to Accommodate a Database** – When you become an Investor you may want to include a database of properties that you have for sale. This will allow potential buyers to do a search and find properties that meet their needs.
- ✓ **Different Hosting Packages** – Some hosting services offer several packages of varying capacities. If you need to upgrade is there an extra set up charge? How easy is it to upgrade? How long does it take? Will I have any down time?
- ✓ **How Fast are Accounts Activated** – Does it take a week just to get your account set up and available on line?

The Technical Stuff

Unfortunately there are some technical terms you will want to become familiar with. It's a necessary evil, in order for you to know that the hosting service can meet your needs. I will explain each tech item and the minimum required for your Jobber website. Okay...let's get to it.

Bandwidth – when you go to a website you are unknowingly downloading files. The **files** may be web pages, images, sound files or some combination. Once **downloaded** the files are displayed in your browser, which allows you to view them.

Each time you view a page, **data is transferred from the host to your web browser**. The amount of data depends on page size, the number of images on the page, the page set up and a **host** of other things.

Pardon the pun. 😊

Bandwidth is the measurement of the amount of data transferred from the host server. You will want to have at least an allowance of 10 gigabytes per month of bandwidth for your Jobber website.

Make sure it's spelled out clearly.

Some hosting services claim to have unlimited bandwidth. This is impossible. Their servers have to physically have a limitation. Make sure you read the fine print on these offers.

Megabytes of Storage – This is the amount of [storage space](#) on the server allocated to your website. Just like on your PC's hard drive, each file takes up a certain amount of space. Remember all of your pages and graphics are files taking up space on the [host server](#).

The amount of space needed will depend on how many pages are on your site and what functions they perform. 100 megabytes will be plenty of space for your Jobber site.

Pop 3 E-mail Accounts – [pop3](#) accounts are like P.O. boxes for e-mail. Your e-mail remains there until you retrieve it. You can have several pop3 e-mail accounts, you see them on almost every website. They look like this info@ezpropertytsolutions.com, service@ezpropertytsolutions.com, support@ezpropertytsolutions.com.

This allows your website to have separate departments for its various functions. You can also set up pop3 accounts for your spouse or other business partners like, Joanne@ezpropertytsolutions.com and

Mike@ezpropertyolutions.com. When you retrieve your e-mail it will be organized by the address.

You definitely want to use pop3 addresses on your website. Don't use your personal e-mail address like Jobber@mail.com. Again... you are running a professional business and it must be presented that way, if you want to be taken seriously.

You may have 5 or 10 pop3 accounts set up. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to retrieve the mail from each account all at once? Well you are in luck. Microsoft Outlook can perform this function.

However, I suggest Eudora Pro, it has top of the line features and it's free. You can download it at <http://www.eudora.com/download/> and check out all of the features.

The sponsored mode is fully functional software. However, there is a small advertisement that is barely noticeable in the bottom corner of the screen. I have used Eudora Pro for years. You should receive at least 10 pop3 e-mail accounts.

Web-based E-mail – This works just like your AOL account. You log in and your mail is already there for you. You can set up accounts for different departments and people like the pop3 boxes.

The difference is, you will have to check each e-mail box individually. Eudora Pro will not work on web-based e-mail accounts.

Forwarding accounts – this feature allows you to forward e-mail from one account to another. If you prefer to use your personal e-mail account, then this is the way to use it. Simply set your Joanne@ezpropertiesolutions.com e-mail account to automatically forward the mail to Joanne@mail.com, and you can retrieve your business mail at your personal account.

Forwarding is automatic and the customers can't tell the e-mail is being forwarded. However, to reply from your business account you will actually have to log into your business account.

You can't send a reply from your business e-mail address with your personal account. Again, pop3 is your best choice. There should be no limit on forwarding.

Autoresponder - [Autoresponders](#) send an automatic response when an e-mail is received. We talked about this a little earlier with the online forms. When your customer submits a form, it will go to your e-mail, and an automatic response will be sent to the customer. What a great time saver.

Autoresponders are easy to set up. Simply type a reply and assign it to an e-mail account. When an e-mail is received at that account your reply will automatically be forwarded to the sender. Your hosting service should provide at least 20 autoresponders.

CGI Bin – Common Gateway Interfaces (CGI) are small scripts that run on your host server, and add interactivity to your site. The scripts are primarily written by programmers and are stored in a directory or bin.

For instance if you wanted to have a hit counter or guest book on your page, you would need a CGI script for it to work. You definitely want a CGI bin.

CGI Library – pre-written CGI scripts that you can easily add to your site, without programming. Common prewritten scripts include page counters, guest books and mailforms. Only the better hosting companies will offer this.

Sql – Sql adds database capabilities to your website. You won't need this right away, but as we mentioned earlier you may need database capabilities as your business grows. Sql is a nice feature to have available.

PHP Support – PHP is a programming language that you will probably not have a use for. It allows web programmers to design dynamically generated pages quickly.

Server Side Includes (SSI)– SSI allows users to dynamically include data in your Web pages. Again, it's a nice feature, but you will probably not use it.

Log files & Site Stats – Site statistics gives you information about the visitors to your website. Tells the number of hits and visits. Also let's you know who visited your site and where they came from. This is a great tool for analyzing your site traffic. The better hosting service companies offer web stats.

FrontPage Extensions – [FrontPage extensions](#) allow the software's special publishing feature to work on the host server. We mentioned earlier that FrontPage is easy to [publish](#); well the extensions make it possible. The forms and some other features also rely on these extensions.

Most hosting services will offer FrontPage extensions, but many charge extra for them. You should not have to pay extra to get the extensions.

FTP Access – FTP access is the other method used to upload your web pages to the host server. You should be able to upload your pages 24 hours a day.

SSL Server – [Secure Socket Layer](#) (SSL) used to transmit and encrypt credit card data securely. Obviously a must have to accept credit card payments. There will probably be an extra charge for this.

Password Protected Directories – These directories allow you to set up passwords so only certain users are allowed to enter the protected directories. This will come in handy if you want to limit your user's access to certain areas of your website. There may be an extra charge for this feature.

Real Audio & Video – This feature allows you to [use streaming audio and video files](#) on your website. Your users will be able to listen to audio files or view video files directly from your site, without any special software.

You could take video from different angles of a property and have the video available for your Investors to view online. This is taking the static picture to another level.

You could also do this as an Investor, and potential buyers could actually see the house on line. Another great technology time saver, but will probably cost extra.

Macromedia Shockwave – Shockwave allows shockwave multimedia presentations to be placed on your website. These are the fancy video introductions that are used on many high priced sites.

Studies show that most people choose to skip shockwave introductions. This is not a good idea for your Jobber website.

MIDI File Support – [Musical Instrument Digital Interface](#) (MIDI) allows you to play music for visitors on your site. These files contain only instrumental music. Sometimes music adds a nice touch, if it's tasteful. You can experiment with and without music to see what your visitors respond to best.

Daily Tape Backup – Backing up your data is a must. You want your files backed up at least daily. In the event of a disaster you won't lose all of your work. A copy of the tape should be stored off site, just in case something happens to the building where your server is housed. Be sure to find out how often the data is backed up.

24/7 Network Monitoring – You want someone monitoring your host server at all times. This helps keep down time to a minimum.

Gif Optimizer – This tool compresses the images on your pages and saves you valuable disk space on the [server](#). This is another great feature, which is not offered by many hosting services.

Shopping Cart – A shopping cart is primarily used by merchant sites, and allows customers to purchase items in multiple areas of the site. The items are grouped together in the shopping cart and then purchased at the same time during “check out”. This feature will most likely cost extra.

Site Building Tool – A site building tool allows you to build your website directly on the server. You can design pages without any [HTML](#) programming knowledge. This is a must have if you don’t want to purchase web building software.

Well [there certainly are a lot of things to know when choosing a hosting company](#). You have to be careful and do your research. While most hosting services are reputable, there are a lot of scams. Make sure you read the fine print.

There are thousands of hosting service companies out there, and I think I have visited almost all of them. The price range is anywhere from “free” as we discussed to over \$100 per month. You should not have to spend more than \$20 per month.

What’s that? Of course I have done the research for you and will let you know which hosting service is best for your Jobber website.

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You Can Build a Website!

Well there you have it, everything you need to know about the anatomy of your website.



Confused? **Don't be intimidated by the technical terms.** You have the ability to learn how to build and operate your own website. Believe me it sounds worse than it is.

When I first started I had the same concerns, but it only took a few days to get the hang of it. By continuing to practice I've learned something new almost everyday. It's just like anything in life worth doing, it takes practice and dedication.

Next we will look at the website building process.

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WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT CYCLE



That's right... **website development is a continuous cycle**. Even when you get your site up and running you are not finished. This is a mistake that most new website developers make, but not you.

In this section we will go through the website development cycle step-by-step and learn what's involved in each phase. In the next section we will watch while Joanne Jobber builds a website for her business.

You remember Joanne from Volume 3, don't you? If not please be sure to read, Volume 3 - Real Estate Jobbing in Action". Okay, let's get started with the cycle!

Real Estate Jobbing Volume 4

What Makes a Website an Effective Tool?

That's the first question you should ask. After all if your website is not an effective tool, what good is it? It may look great and have every option in the world, but is it effective?

The next thing to remember is the **KIS** principle. You know, **Keep It Simple**. Believe it or not simple and functional sites are far more effective than those \$100,000 sites with spinning animations, shockwave effects and flash technology.

For one thing **many people can't even view a site with all of these gadgets**. Even the majority of the people that can see the effects will skip them if possible. Why? Because special effects cause the pages to load very slowly.

Let's face it people will visit your site for one reason, information. **They want the information** and they want it as quick as possible. Don't waste your customer's time, simply skip the ornaments.



Remember this quote, "**Content is King**", and it will rule the success of your website. It's the content people are after. They are not interested in looking at a bunch of cartoons running across the page.

Keep your content tight and informative and you will indeed have a useful business tool. Isn't that why you're building a website?

Make sure your site is well edited. There should be no typos and it should flow smoothly. Grammar is not quite as important on the web, as it is for literary projects. No one will notice a comma splice here or a choppy sentence there. Your sentences should be short and flow well when read.

Your personal touch will make the website effective. Don't copy other websites. Make your site unique and special. This does not mean you can't look for ideas, and then put your own special touch on them. We

all do that to some extent. But don't copy another site, besides it's probably copy right protected.

Write the same way that you talk. Your visitors should feel that you are talking to them individually. They are not impressed with fancy words or long sentences. Just be yourself and write so that even a child can understand.

Interactivity is another excellent way to make your site effective. We love instant gratification, and that's why people love interactive elements. Just make sure they are useful.

The forms we looked at earlier are a great example. They allow your customers to send information to you in real time. Your customers will receive instant e-mail confirmation that you have received their information.



You may have been at the beach with your family, but you will still be able to take care of your customer. Now that's a valuable tool!

Include your contact information; your phone number, address, fax number and e-mail address on every page. Let your customers know you are accessible.

Organization is very important. Your visitors should be able to navigate around your website easily. Everyone knows it's no fun to be lost. Be sure to include road signs all over your website.

Think like your customer. Build a site that they will appreciate and use. If you build it for yourself you will have a very ineffective and lonely site. Have everything that your customers need readily available. To do this you must know who your audience will be, and build your site to their needs.

Use very few images. Extra pictures and animations clutter your site and make it look disorganized. **Only include a graphic if it adds value to your site.** Your most valuable graphics will be the pictures of your property leads. Now these graphics will add value, and help make you money!

Use a white or very light background with dark text. Dark backgrounds and light text will cause eyestrain to your visitors. Remember, visitors are guests and you should make them comfortable.

This will cause eye strain

The words are not very easy to read,
and play tricks on the eye. After a
few minutes of this your customers
are ready to leave.

Don't use page counters. They serve no purpose for your visitors. Frankly they could care less how many people have clicked on your site. They only want to know what's in it for them.

Don't have unnecessary links to other sites. Again this clutters up your site. Only include links that add value.

Use headlines to start off each section. Headlines allow your visitors to scan the page and quickly find what they are looking for. I know you put a lot of time and effort into every word, but most people will scan to find what they're interested in and then read.

Your website should be updated often, don't let your content get stale. You should always be looking for fresh content to add, which your visitors will appreciate. There's nothing worse than going to a site with outdated information.

Do not put up an "under construction" page, this will really turn your visitors off. Don't launch the website until it is ready for the public. Your site will always be under construction, remember website building is a continuous cycle.

Let's take a look at the 10-step cycle now.

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The Cycle

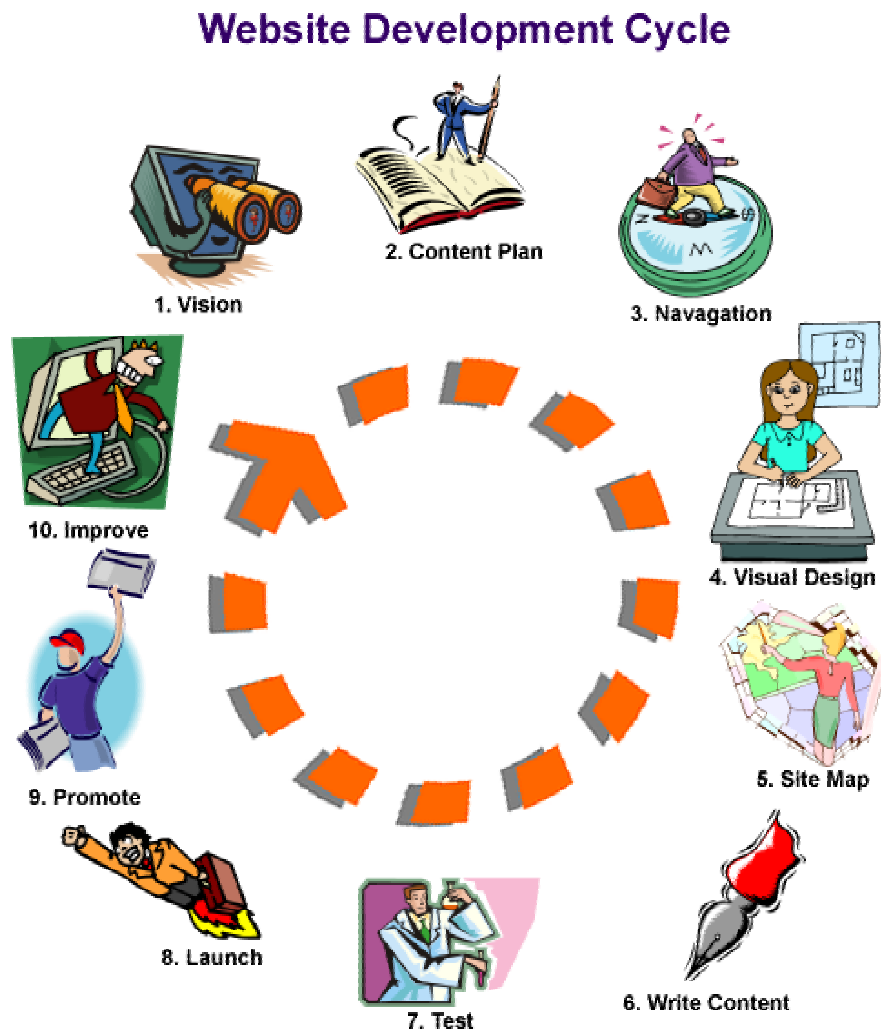
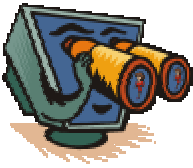


Figure 16 - Website Development Cycle

Step 1: Vision



This is the **brainstorming phase** of website development. This is the most important step. Plan to spend a good amount of time on this step. Put your thinking cap on and really concentrate on the details that follow. Nothing good can happen if you don't know the purpose of your website.

Start by **defining the goals** for your website. **What is the purpose** of your business? **How does your website fit into your business plan?** What is the **purpose of the website?** **Why are you building a website?** **Who do you expect to visit your website?** Think both short-term and long-term.

The primary goal of your website should be to meet the needs of your customers; **Investors, Network Contacts and Motivated Sellers**. Now you may decide that initially you only want to meet the needs of Your Investors. That's great; remember it's a cycle so you can change it later.

A secondary goal might be to expand your business. You are in effect adding 24-hour customer service and an advertising department, which will allow you to spend more time looking for leads.

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Another goal could be to allow your Investors to pay your referral fees by credit card. You realize the more options an Investor has for payment, the quicker you'll get your money. Credit cards are convenient and easy for Investors to use. They can pay anytime day or night without affecting their cash flow.

I'm sure getting paid as quickly as possible is one of your businesses goals, let your website help.

A fourth goal should be to give your customers an automated way to get and give information. Set up automated forms that collect the information from your customers.

No one really likes leaving voice mails. We like to get the information we need immediately. Your website should have a great deal of information available right at their fingertips, and they should be able to use an online form to request additional information.

Make it easy on your customer and easy on you. A few clicks on your website and the information is right there, whether you're home or out getting leads.

A possible fifth goal might be to improve communications with your customers. Keep the site updated with the latest information on your business and all of your customers will be able to stay current.

There's always the risk of forgetting to update someone. You don't want to end up saying, "Oh, I didn't tell you that?"

A long-term goal might be to allow the site to be able to accommodate your Investor business, after you take the next step. It's never too early to begin planning.

Next you should define the audience that will visit your site. This is the number one mistake most site creators make. They haven't thought about whom the site is being built for. How can it possibly be an effective tool?

We have already discussed that your primary audience will most likely consists of Investors, Network Contacts and Motivated Sellers. Decide which of the three (or all) you will cater to.

You may want to begin by just building your site for Investors and then expand to the other groups later on. But make sure you decide on your audience in the vision phase of the cycle. Build your site to meet the needs of your selected audience.

Create a profile of each group that your site will serve. Include the type of information they will need, and how you'll supply the information. What are their likes and dislikes? How often will they use your website? What features would be helpful for them?

How do you get his information? Why, you have to think like your customers, and then ask them directly. Later you will make changes based on customer feedback. Remember; create a profile for each group.

List the **benefits** that your site will provide to your customers. Not the features; the benefits. In other words, what's in it for them? For instance a feature is they can pay your referral fee online with a credit card. The benefits are; it helps their cash flow, it gives them more time to concentrate on buying and selling properties, etc.

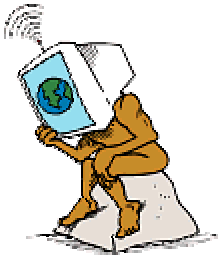
Come up with a list of at least 5 features, and then think of the benefits that the features will provide to your customers. This is the start of developing your website content. You will also have to do this exercise for each group you serve. You may start out targeting Investors only, but make sure to repeat this exercise as you expand your audience.

Here's a checklist to help you get started.

- ✓ Why are you building the website?
- ✓ What is the goal of the site?
- ✓ How will you judge the success of the site?
- ✓ What are the limiting technical factors?
- ✓ What will users expect from the site?
- ✓ What type of computer will your users have?
- ✓ What connection speed will your visitors have?
- ✓ Website Name?
- ✓ Company Name or Your Name?
- ✓ Slogan or tagline?
- ✓ Address?
- ✓ Phone number?
- ✓ Fax number?
- ✓ E-mail address?
- ✓ Other e-mail accounts you will set up – info, service, etc.?
- ✓ Business purpose – Mission Statement?

- ✓ Website purpose?
- ✓ What do you want to accomplish?
- ✓ Who is your target audience?
- ✓ Are they male or female?
- ✓ What level of education will they have?
- ✓ What is their reading and vocabulary level?
- ✓ What are their technical abilities?
- ✓ How often will users return to your site?
- ✓ What's their reason for returning?
- ✓ What benefits will your website offer customers?
- ✓ What services will you offer?
- ✓ How will your website be interactive?
- ✓ Will you accept credit cards online?
- ✓ Do you want password protection?
- ✓ Will you have a logo?
- ✓ When is your target date to be up and running?
- ✓ Visit similar sites and note your likes and dislikes of these sites.
- ✓ Will you include a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) page?
- ✓ What are your future expansion plans?
- ✓ What image will your website have?
- ✓ How often will you update your website?
- ✓ How much time will you devote to building your website?

Take time and give a lot of thought to this first step in the cycle, it will make the remaining steps much easier. **Really get inside of your website and think it through.**



Most first time website builders gloss over this step, and their site reflects it. It's not easy, but building an effective business tool is worth it.

Why waste time building something that will have no value to you or your customers? **Get out a pad of paper and start putting your thoughts together. Just start writing everything that comes to mind, whether it makes sense or not.** Review this section and the checklist again and fill in the missing information.

Take a break for an hour or so, but you will find yourself thinking about your website and getting more ideas. Write them all down. Then review your notes and organize them logically.

You will need this information later.

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Step 2: Content Plan



"Content is King", where have you heard that before? The content of your site will be a major factor in its success. Content is simply the information, graphics and other elements on each page.

Before actually developing the content of each page, you will need to decide what pages your site will have. Your website will not be a mega-site, it only needs to be big enough to accomplish the goals you have set for it.

There are basically three types of websites, **merchant sites, informational sites and entertainment sites**. Your Jobber website will obviously be an informational site. Although you may have a merchant account, the primary purpose will be to provide and receive information.

With that in mind begin planning the pages that you will need to accomplish your goals. Review your website goals again and think about which pages will be needed to carry them out.

Take the answers to the questions you were asked earlier, and decide where they fit into your website. What page will make the best use of the answers and provide your visitors with the information they are seeking?

Revisit the benefits that your site will provide to customers. What pages are needed to convey them to your audience? **Organize the benefits into an outline** indicating which page they belong on.

Below are some common pages that websites contain. You will not use all of these pages. Use only what fits your plan. You will probably get some new ideas and think of ways to customize the pages to fit your business strategy.

- ✓ **Home Page** – every website has a home page, which is the index.htm page. This is usually the first page your visitors will see.
- ✓ **About Me/Us Page** – tells a little about you and the services that you offer. You can include your experience on this page.
- ✓ **FAQ** – if you get the same types of questions over and over, set up a FAQ page. Publicize your FAQ page on your home page. Give them the answers they are seeking.
- ✓ **Services Page** – describes each service that is offered.
- ✓ **News Page** – latest information about your business and website.
- ✓ **Privacy Statement Page** – let's your visitors know that you keep all information private. You will not sell or give out their e-mail address to anyone. All information submitted is kept strictly confidential.

You definitely want a privacy statement, since you are collecting personal information through your forms. There is a sample privacy statement in Appendix A of this Volume.

- ✓ **Feedback Form** – an automated form that allows your customers to tell you what they think of your site and business.
- ✓ **Support Page** – allows customers to ask specific questions and get a response by e-mail.
- ✓ **Site Map** – shows the layout of your website. Usually used for larger websites. Can be graphical or text based.
- ✓ **Search Function**– larger sites allow customers to search the website through a search function. This works just like an Internet search engine except it searches only the website for the requested information.
- ✓ **Information Request Form** – an automated form that allows visitors to request brochures and other company information.
- ✓ **Contact Me/Us Page** – provides all the pertinent contact information. Have as many contact options as possible.
 - Telephone/Cell Phone
 - Snail mail
 - E-mail
 - On-line Contact Form
 - Fax Number

You don't want to miss any potential contact with your customers. This shows you are a professional and serious about your Jobber business.



You can **get a free fax** number at <http://www.efax.com>.

It will be a “receive” only fax and have a non-local number. But a non-local number is better than no fax number at all.

If you want to have a local or 800 number and be able to also send faxes, the eFax plus account will cost \$12.95 a month, plus 10 cents a page for each fax sent. There is no charge for receiving local faxes and long distance faxes are 20 cents per page.

This is still less expensive than setting up a separate fax line, and paying the monthly bill.

The outline that you developed will be used as the basis of actually writing the content of your web pages. Take your time, think it through and get all of your content organized on the appropriate page.

Review your notes and finalize the outline of the content that you plan on using.

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Step 3. Site Navigation Plan



You have to know how your customers will be able to move around your website, and get from page to page. **Navigation is the key** to your

customers being able to get from one part of your site to another. A customer that gets lost is likely a customer that you will lose.

Navigation is accomplished through the use of hyperlinks. When your customer clicks on a hyperlink it takes them to another place in the website or to another website altogether. [A hyperlink looks like this](#), it's usually colored text and underlined.

When you point your mouse to a hyperlink the pointer turns into a finger. When you click the hyperlink it takes you to the programmed destination. Don't worry hyperlinks are easy to set up with the web publishing programs you will be using.

Site Navigation usually takes two forms, the **navigation bar** and the **table of contents**.

The navigation bar can be at the top of the page, the bottom of the page or in both locations. In the navigation bar each page is listed as a hyperlink. The hyperlink may be simple text or complex graphics. When you click the link it takes you to that page in the website.

The table of contents is similar to the navigation bar, except it is on the right side of the page, left side of the page or on both sides. The table of contents links can also be a text or graphic link.

Many websites use both types of navigation functions. Typically the main pages, home, FAQ, feedback and the contact us page are on the navigation bar. More specific pages will be listed in the table of contents.

Some sites have so many pages that there is a separate table of contents on almost every page. It's literally a navigation source for just one page or one section of the site. Fortunately your Jobber website will probably only need one navigation source. At least to start with!

If you have four or less pages you can use just a navigation bar. With four pages or more you should use a table of contents or combination of the navigation tools. **I suggest using simple text links.** They take up less space than graphic links and the **pages will load faster.**

Your **navigation should be consistent throughout the site.** Make sure your visitors can easily get to your main pages from anywhere in the website. Include navigation links on every page of your website. Here are some good navigational questions to ask yourself. **You must think like your visitor.**

- ✓ Where am I in the site?
- ✓ Where can I go?
- ✓ How do I get there?
- ✓ How do I get back where I started?
- ✓ What page am I on?
- ✓ Are the links easy to understand?

Make sure the visitor knows where she is in relation to the rest of the sight. Your links should be clear and consistent. Let's take a look at a website with an excellent navigational design.

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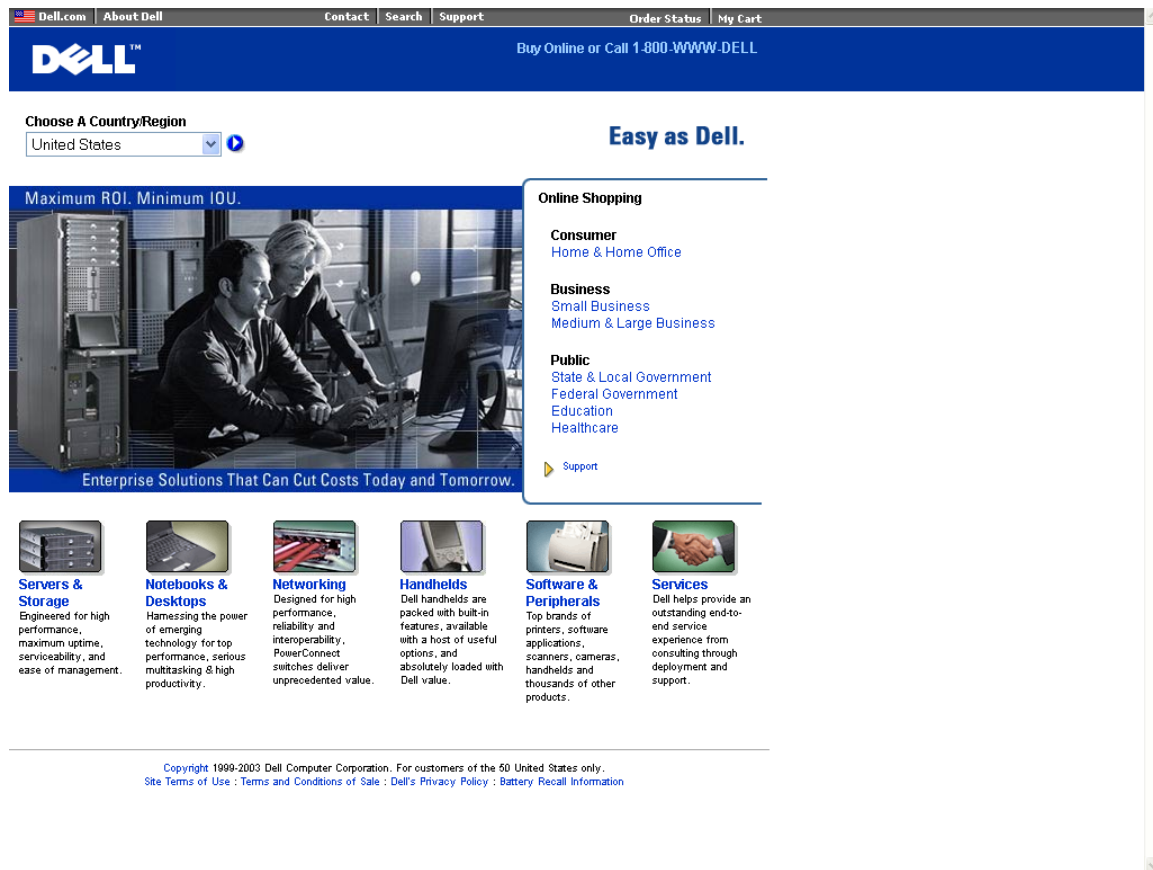


Figure 17 - Dell Computer Website

As you can see Dell has a navigation bar at the top, which features the main pages, home page (Dell.com), About Dell, Contact, Search, Support, Order Status and My Cart. These are the most important pages, and links to these pages appear on every page in the site.

On the bottom is a graphic based navigation bar with links to specific products. This navigation bar will not appear on each page. Each product will have it's own navigation system.

On the right side of the screen is a table of contents with links to some of their specific services. These pages are more specific and the navigation changes once you select an item.

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If we select the "Home and Home Office" link the following page appears.

The screenshot shows the Dell.com website interface for the 'HOME & HOME OFFICE' section. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: 'Computers', 'Software & Peripherals', 'Service & Support', and 'Learning Center'. Below this, a secondary navigation bar includes 'Main', 'Desktops', 'Notebooks', 'Handhelds', 'Hot Deals!', and 'Help'. The left sidebar contains a search bar, 'Buy Online or Call 1-800-915-3355', 'All Categories' dropdown, 'Search' button, 'Advanced Search', 'Free E-mail Updates' section, 'My Account' links (My Account Login, Register Now, My Cart, Order Status), 'Purchase Assistance' links (Payment Options, Tax & Shipping Info, Mail-In Rebates, Returns, Online Security, Privacy Policy, Request a Catalog, Direct Store Locations), and 'Shopping Alternatives' links (Refurbished Systems, Dell Affiliates Program). The main content area features 'FEATURED SPECIALS' for two desktop models: 'Dimension 2350 Desktop' and 'Dimension 8250 Desktop'. Each model has a 'FREE HARD DRIVE UPGRADE!' offer. Below these are tables for 'Desktop Special Offers' and 'Notebook Special Offers'. The right sidebar shows 'START SHOPPING' links for 'Desktops', 'Notebooks', 'NEW! Dell Handhelds', and 'Peripherals'.

Notice how the navigation has changed. The navigation bar at the bottom is gone, and has been replaced by offers for home businesses. The left table of contents has specific customer service links, while the right side contains more links to specific products.

The four tabs at the top, "Computers", "Software and Peripherals", "Service and Support" and "Learning Center" all have their own unique navigation system. But if you click on any of those tabs, the other three are still accessible and you can easily switch from one tab to another, without getting lost.

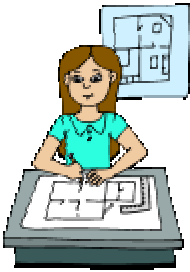
At the very top of the page remains the links to the main pages on the website.

Dell's site is obviously a huge website with hundreds, maybe even thousands of pages. But, notice how easily you can navigate the site without getting lost.

While your site may only contain a few pages, still aim for the same functionality and navigational ease that Dell uses. It will pay off big time as your site grows.

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Step 4. Visual Design



Your visual design plan will layout how the site will look and feel. Remember the **KIS** principal mentioned earlier? Well it definitely comes into play when you're deciding on the visual appeal your site will have.

You are **designing a visual theme** that will form an impression on your customers. Make sure **your design conveys the attitude and feelings** that you want to be known for.

Take another look at Dell's home page. Here's a multi-billion dollar company with a very clean, uncluttered home page. There is a very professional photo of their product in action and the links for the most part are simple text links. Even the graphic based links are very small and pertain to the page they are linked to.

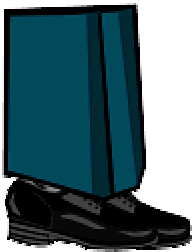


Figure 18 - Dell's Graphical Navigation Links

How many fancy animations and Shockwave effects do you see on Dell's site? The answer is zero.

This is the level of professionalism that you want to strive for. Your business may not be as big as Dell, but your website can be just as professional.

That's one of the great things about the Internet, your website can be just as good as the giant fortune 500 company's websites.



Just because you are a small business, do your customers deserve anything less than Dell's customers?

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Let's start with the background of your pages. All of your pages should have the same background. The background is the color or graphic that the text is on. Earlier we looked at a black background with white text. Remember? If not [click here](#)

The **background should be white or a very light color**. Reference Dell's background; it's a basic white. The white background makes the dark text really stand out. Dell's text colors are dark blue and black.

Nothing fancy here. The goal is to make the site as friendly to visitors as possible. You should follow Dell's lead, and use common sense for your site's visual design.

I have seen black backgrounds with neon blue text, what an eye killer. I have seen pink backgrounds with red lettering; talk about hard to read. I have seen backgrounds that include images that blend onto the text. Am I supposed to read around the images?

This is not rocket science. Not only is it easier to build a simple professional site, but also it's better for your visitors.

Only **use graphics that serve a business need**. Most animations don't serve a business need. It's just the designer letting you know he has the skills to create these effects.

Do you really care? I know it's tempting to include animations and some of them are cute, but leave them off of your site.

You must design for slow modem connections. Remember it will take another couple of years for high-speed connections to become the norm. Large graphics and animations slow down the connection time dramatically.



Don't let this be your customers!

Simple fonts are the best to use for text. Verdana, Times New Roman and Arial are always good choices. You can use one for the headlines and another for the body text. Or you can use the same font throughout.

Stay away from the fancy script and specialty fonts. Not only can they be hard to read, but also not all computers are capable of displaying them. Think of your customers first.

Make sure the fonts are big enough to easily be read on screen. Test them out and adjust so anyone will be able to read the great information on your web pages.

Let's take yet another look at one of Dell's pages. These are pretty basic and easy to read fonts. Dark colors on a white background make for a very readable site.

Use headlines to capture your visitor's attention and pull him into a particular area of your site. Take a look at one of Dell's product pages.



Figure 19 - Dell's Visual Design

The headline is “**Notebooks and Desktops**”, and the body text proceeds to explain the benefits.

Notice the “white space”. White space separates your content and makes the site less jumbled. Remember, the visual appeal should reflect the image of your site. Use white space effectively in your design.

Do you have a logo and catch line or slogan for your website? Well you should. Look at Dell’s logo; again it’s very simple and professional.

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Their catch line is "Easy as Dell". Believe me with some thought you can come up with a logo and catch line. Just make sure they give you a professional image.

You can use the following free services to create a custom logo for your website (text only). You simply pick the font, size and effects. Then enter your website or business name and presto you have a logo.

The text will be converted to a graphic image. Right click on your new logo to save to your computer and it's all yours!



<http://www.3dtextmaker.com/>



<http://www.highpowergraphics.com/xaratools.html>



<http://www.cooltext.com/logos/index.xhtmll>



<http://www.flamingtext.com/fonts/>



<http://www.coolarchive.com/logogen.cfm>

Your site **should have a consistent look and feel throughout**. The page design, the fonts and the font sizes should be the same on each page. This is best accomplished by setting up a template.

A template is a model that you will use for each page that you create. Your template will contain the color scheme, the navigation links, the page layout and images that will be carried throughout your site. Be sure to include your logo.

When you are ready to create a new page simply load your template and:

1. Change the page title
2. Customize the page
3. Save as a different page name

This will keep your template intact to use for your next page. You are now assured that each page will have the exact same layout. Most web authoring programs have a template feature that will assist you.

Use tables to make a photo album for your Investors. Tables will allow you to neatly layout the pictures of your property leads. A table is simply a series of columns and rows, in which you can insert text and graphics. An example of a table is shown below.

Columns ↓ ↓	
Row → 	Your detailed description of the house should go in this cell of the table. Include as much information about the property as possible for your Investor. You can have several tables on one page.

Figure 20 - Sample Table

Most web publishing applications will have a tool to help you create tables. Typically you just select the number of rows and columns you want, the software creates the table. Add pictures and descriptions and you're all set. The table above has 2 columns and 1 row.

Tables make a neat and organized way to present your lead pictures to Investors. It's like a photo album.

Don't forget to include some type of interaction for your visitors. A great way to add interaction is to include an online form to capture some type of information. Consultation and information request forms are quick and easy. You can also offer some type of special report to draw interest.

During the visual design phase you will decide on the color scheme, layout and overall feel of the website. Develop your logo and tag line to add your own personal touch and brand. Again, **you must design your website with your visitors in mind.**

Step 5 Map it Out



This is one of the easier steps. You have already done the hard work of:

- ✓ Deciding the purpose of your website
- ✓ Deciding what will go in your website
- ✓ Deciding how visitors will move around your website
- ✓ Deciding what your website will look like

Now you **simply have to lay it out** in a graphical form. This can be done on a notepad or on your computer, whichever you are most comfortable with. Draw the pages of your site and show the relationship and flow of the pages.

For example, you might decide to have a home page, a feedback page, a motivated seller page, a page for your Network Contacts, and a Contact Us page.

You might also decide to have a consultation request form, a lead submission form and a feedback form. The forms will all have automatic e-mail responses. Your map would look something like this.

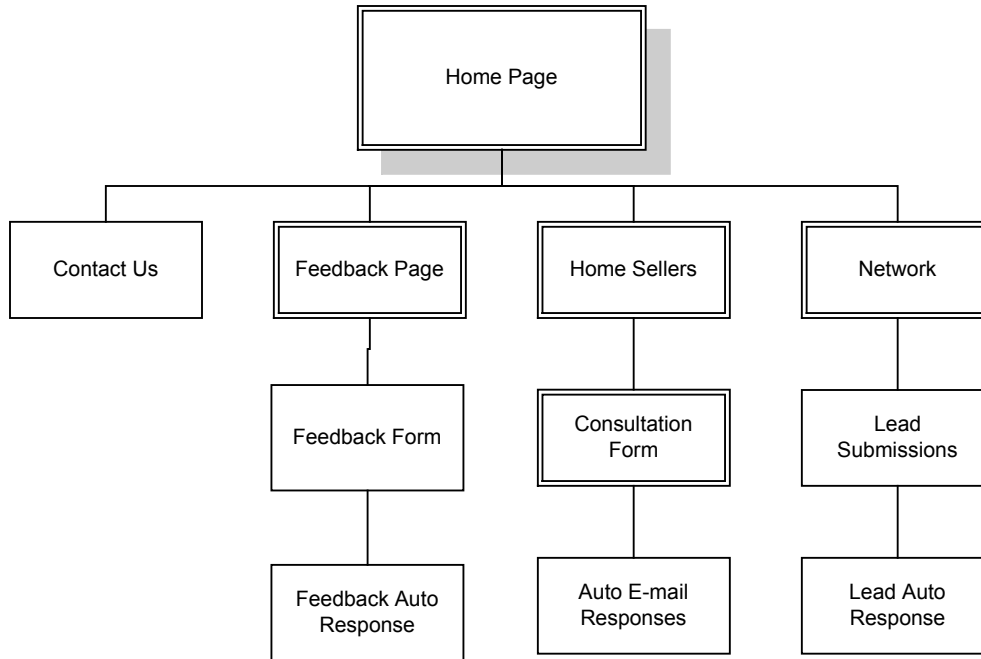


Figure 21 - Sample Website Storyboard

You can also use sticky notes to plan your site. They are easy to change around and present a good visual image of your site.

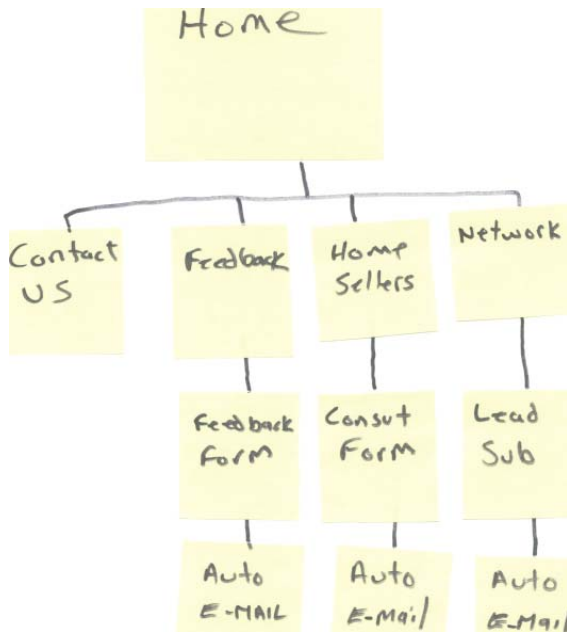


Figure 22 - Sample Storyboard with "Sticky Notes"

Not a work of art but it'll get the job done.

Keep your design as flat as possible. This design has two levels of content. The third level is simply the automated e-mail response, which your visitors will not see. **A flat site, that is a site with just a few layers, makes for easier navigation.**

In the design above everything starts with the home page. Visitors can go to any of the second level pages (contact us, feedback, sellers, network) from the home page. Each form that your visitors complete will trigger an automatic e-mail response.

After your visitor completes the form they will be automatically taken back to the second level page where they came from. For instance, after completing the consultation request form, the visitor will be taken back to the home sellers page.

As we learned in the Navigation section, each page will have a direct link to the home page and second level pages. This will prevent visitors from getting lost. Although it's highly unlikely that anyone would get lost on a small website, you still want to build it the right way.

If you have followed all of the steps outlined earlier and gone through the exercises, then this step will take a very short amount of time. It's merely drawing the pages to see how they are visually related.

If you notice something is unclear or missing, go back and revise your plan until you are satisfied. Once you are happy with the site map you can move on to the next step and begin to fill in the content for each page.

Step 6 Write Content



This should also be a relatively painless step, if you diligently prepared your outline in the content plan portion of the cycle. I told you it would pay off later. Imagine how difficult it would be to stare at that blank screen and write the content off the top of your head.

Believe it or not many websites were designed without going through the cycle. You can definitely tell when you run across one of these sites. There is no purpose or direction, and as a result it's an ineffective tool.

Next you simply organize your outline for each page into logical segments. Each segment should have a headline and then body text to support the headline. Write as if you are talking to your visitor one-on-one. Be yourself and avoid using big words and jargon.

Write your content for online reading, not "book reading". Online reading consists of scanning pages looking strictly for the information that interests the reader.

Use bullet points when listing items.

- ✓ Readers can easily scan bullet points
- ✓ They are quick to read

✓ They are concise

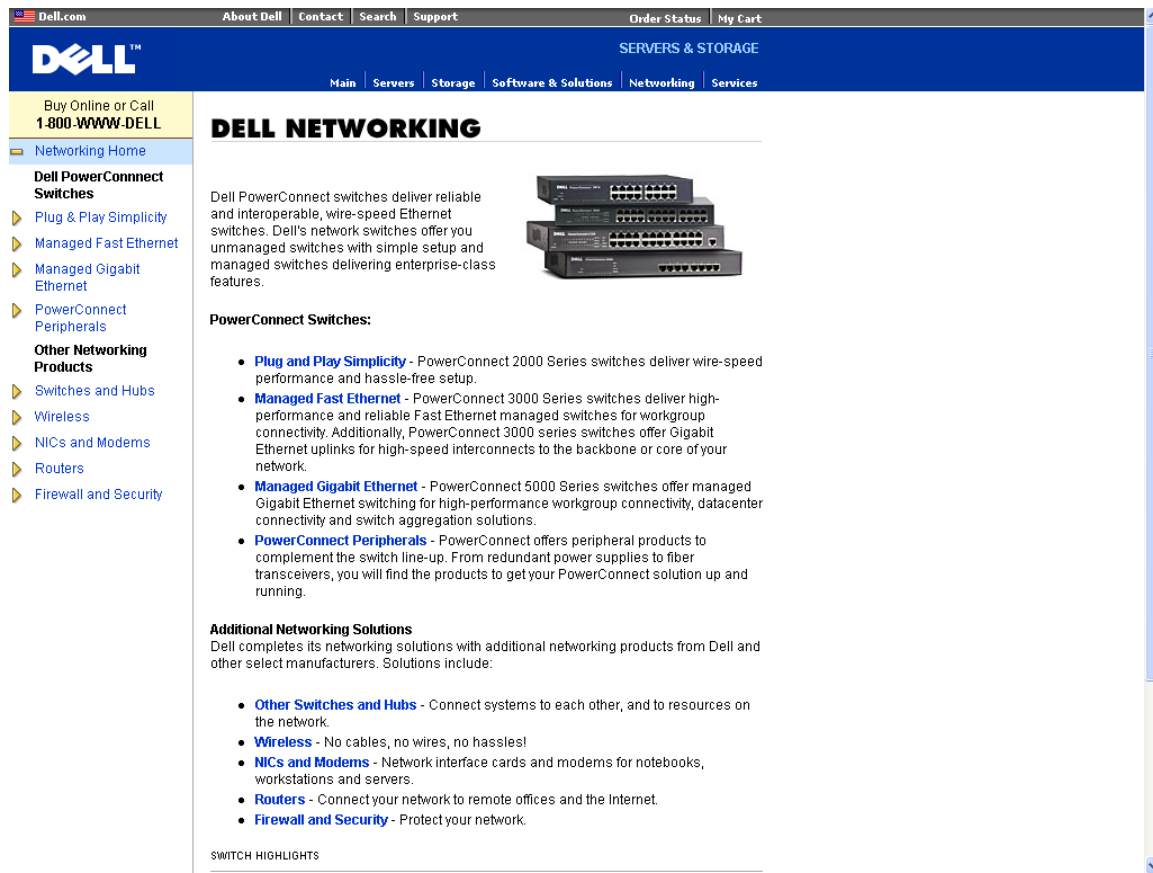
Delete the “fluff”. Website visitors want clear concise and direct information. Don’t beat around the bush; just get straight to the point. Web readers are impatient and expect to find information easily.

Use upbeat and conversational language to keep the reader’s attention focused on the benefits. Use short sentences and paragraphs. A paragraph should not exceed four lines.

Let’s visit Dell’s website again. Notice the page headline, “**Dell Networking**”. There is body text below that explains the benefits of their networking services.

There are a couple of sub-headlines on the page containing more specific information on the networking components. Each sub-headline has the supporting body text, again highlighting the benefits of the products.

This is the type of organization your web pages should have. Lead your visitors through the pages logically. Make it easy for them.



The screenshot shows the Dell website's 'SERVERS & STORAGE' section, specifically the 'DELL NETWORKING' page. The top navigation bar includes links for 'About Dell', 'Contact', 'Search', 'Support', 'Order Status', and 'My Cart'. The left sidebar contains a 'Networking Home' link and a list of product categories: 'Dell PowerConnect Switches', 'Plug & Play Simplicity', 'Managed Fast Ethernet', 'Managed Gigabit Ethernet', 'PowerConnect Peripherals', 'Other Networking Products', 'Switches and Hubs', 'Wireless', 'NICs and Modems', 'Routers', and 'Firewall and Security'. The main content area features the 'DELL NETWORKING' heading, a description of Dell PowerConnect switches, a stack of three switches, and a list of 'PowerConnect Switches' with links to 'Plug and Play Simplicity', 'Managed Fast Ethernet', 'Managed Gigabit Ethernet', and 'PowerConnect Peripherals'. Below this is a section for 'Additional Networking Solutions' with links to 'Other Switches and Hubs', 'Wireless', 'NICs and Modems', 'Routers', and 'Firewall and Security'. The page also includes a 'SWITCH HIGHLIGHTS' section at the bottom.

Be sure your content is loaded with benefits to the user. You have already defined your target audience(s), and the purpose of each page. So **every page is already designed with the visitor in mind.**

Above all think like your target audience when writing content. Include clear concise information that will benefit them. Now put it all together and write the content that will get the results you want from your website.

This is your first draft so just let the content flow. Don't worry about spelling or grammar at this point. **You don't want to interrupt the flow of creativity.** After completing the rough draft of the page go over it with your spell checker.

Your first draft of the site is now complete. But you're far from finished.

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Step 7 Testing



Ah, now the fun starts! You want to test, test, test and test some more. Start by reading every page, word by word looking for missing words, misspelled words and anything that does not make sense.

Depending on your web publishing software you may be able to “**preview**” your site in your browser without actually publishing it to your host server. **This allows you, and only you to see your work in progress.** It's not ready for the general public yet. Always do your testing in the preview mode.

You will find that there are many changes and corrections to make. You will get new ideas as you go through your review. You may need to change the order of some of your content. You may need to eliminate some content that just does not add value. Look at it super critically.

After a thorough review, walk away for a day or so. Then go back and re-read every word on every page, this time read it out loud. Again

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you will notice some of your content still does not flow very well when read out loud.

If it doesn't sound right to you, then you can bet it won't make sense to your visitors. Make the necessary changes and take another break.

Okay...let's go over it once again. This time read every word on every page out loud, and record yourself with a portable tape recorder.



Listen to the tape. Does your content flow smoothly? Are you tripping over words? Does it all make sense to you?

Go back and make the necessary changes, re-record and listen to the results. Your content should now start coming together and your comfort level will grow.

There is a great feature on the upgraded version of the PC 602 Text word processor that came with your Biz Toolz. It's called text to speech, and allows your computer to actually read the document to you. You can follow along and note any errors that you find. It makes editing much easier. You can use the link below to upgrade your 602 Text software.

<http://www.rejobber.com/PC602/upgrade.htm>

Next, test every link on every page and make sure they are working correctly. How many times have you clicked a link and gotten the dreaded 404 error, "page not found". How embarrassing, you must check and double-check your links.

Go ahead and publish your site now. It should be fairly respectable, besides no one knows your site is available yet.

Next test the usability of the site on both major web browsers, Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape. You may notice some slight differences in the browsers, but if you have followed the earlier steps your site will work without a hitch on both browsers.

You probably have one browser or the other or maybe even both. If not you can download them free.

Internet Explorer

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/default.asp>

Netscape

<http://channels.netscape.com/ns/browsers/default.jsp>

After you download the browsers click the icons on your desktop and bring up your website. Check it out and make sure everything looks all right. Go back and make any changes necessary.

Now you are ready for some outside testing. Take your site in for a tune up at the net mechanic.



<http://www.netmechanic.com/toolbox/html-code.htm>

This is a great site with some free analysis tools. It will check for broken links, HTML problems, browser compatibility, load time and spelling errors.

The screenshot shows the NetMechanic website interface. At the top is a navigation bar with links for LOGIN, HELP, ABOUT US, PRODUCTS, and SITE MAP. Below this is a banner for 'Power Tools for Your Web Site!' with buttons for 'Improve Site', 'Promote Site', 'Monitor Server', 'Webmaster Tips', and 'Home'. A red banner below the navigation bar states 'Over 52 Million Web Pages Tested!'. The main content area is titled '1 Improve Your Site' and features the 'HTML Toolbox™'. A graphic of a clipboard with a checklist is shown, listing items like 'Link Check', 'Load Time Check', 'Spelling Check', 'HTML Check', and 'HTML Repair'. Text explains that the HTML Toolbox scans pages for errors and offers a free test of up to 5 pages. A 'Sign Up Now!' button is prominently displayed. To the left, a sidebar lists 'NetMechanic Tools' under two categories: '1 Improve Tools' (including Find HTML Code Errors, Find Browser Problems, and Image Optimization Tool) and '2 Promote Tools' (including Search Engine Placement Tools, Keyword Popularity Tool, META Tag Generator, and Search Engine Optimization). A 'Sign up NOW!' button with a cursor icon is also visible. The 'HTML Toolbox Free Sample' section includes a form to enter a URL for a free test of up to 5 web pages.

NetMechanic®
Power Tools for Your Web Site!

LOGIN | HELP | ABOUT US | PRODUCTS | SITE MAP

Improve Site Promote Site Monitor Server Webmaster Tips Home

Over 52 Million Web Pages Tested!

You are here: [Home](#) >> [Improve Site - Toolbox](#) >> [Free Sample](#)

1 Improve Your Site HTML Toolbox™ Other Tools: [GIFBot™](#) [Browser Photo™](#)

HTML Toolbox™

Don't let Web site errors drive visitors away!

HTML Toolbox scans your pages and lets you know about errors before your customers find them.

Get a free test of up to 5 pages in your Web site!

Our 5-point check-up will test your **links**, check your **HTML code**, rate your **page load time**, check your **spelling**, and more!

HTML Toolbox is safe to use. Our tools won't automatically change anything on your site. All repairs are made to a copy of your Web page that you can download and install when you're ready.

HTML Toolbox benefits:

- Repair common HTML errors
- Find broken links
- Get help with HTML tags
- Check your load time

Sign Up Now!

Scroll Down for Free Sample

Sign up NOW!

HTML Toolbox Free Sample

Get a free test of up to 5 Web pages by filling out the form below.
For a Customized Test, [click here](#).

(1) Enter your URL.

Enter address of the page you'd like to test.

URL:

Figure 23 - Net Mechanic Website

Enter your website address here

Simply enter your website address and wait for the report.

The report will list several categories and score your site for each category on a scale of 1 to 5 stars. Five stars equals an excellent rating. If you get anything less than 4 there is still work to be done.



Figure 24 - Net Mechanic Sample Report

Above you see the report for www.realestatejobber.com. Not bad all 4 and 5 stars. Let's take a look at the detail report for one of my 4 star categories, spell check.

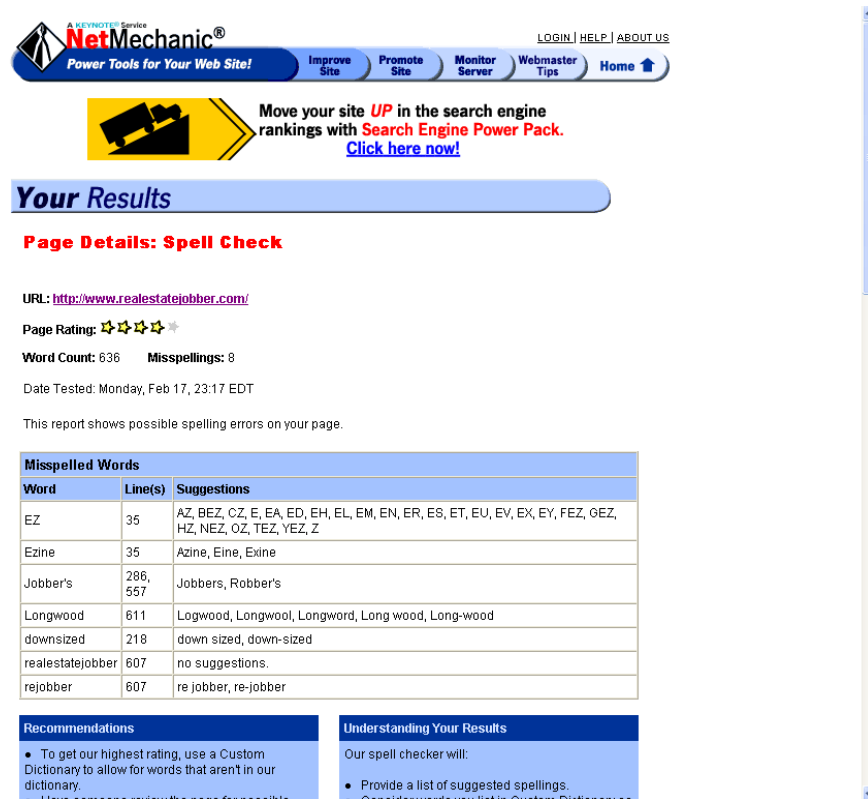
All the words that show as spelling errors are actually words that are unique to my product and website. So there really are no misspelled words. Be sure to check the detail reports and print them out.

Go back to your website and correct any problems that were brought to light by the net mechanic. Fix any broken links and correct the spelling errors. You can also use their free gif optimizer to reduce the size of your images.

<http://www.netmechanic.com/GIFBot/optimize-graphic.htm>

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Optimizing your gif images will greatly improve your page loading speed. Learn everything you need to know about gif optimization at http://www.netmechanic.com/news/vol3/loadtime_no6.htm.



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Power Tools for Your Web Site!

LOGIN | HELP | ABOUT US

Improve Site | Promote Site | Monitor Server | Webmaster Tips | Home

Move your site **UP** in the search engine rankings with **Search Engine Power Pack**.
[Click here now!](#)

Your Results

Page Details: Spell Check

URL: <http://www.realestatejobber.com/>

Page Rating: ★★★★★

Word Count: 636 Misspellings: 8

Date Tested: Monday, Feb 17, 23:17 EDT

This report shows possible spelling errors on your page.

Misspelled Words		
Word	Line(s)	Suggestions
EZ	35	AZ, BEZ, CZ, E, EA, ED, EH, EL, EM, EN, ER, ES, ET, EU, EV, EX, EY, FEZ, GEZ, HZ, NEZ, OZ, TEZ, YEZ, Z
Ezine	35	Azine, Eine, Exine
Jobber's	286, 557	Jobbers, Robber's
Longwood	611	Logwood, Longwool, Longword, Long wood, Long-wood
downsized	218	down sized, down-sized
realestatejobber	607	no suggestions.
rejobber	607	re jobber, re-jobber

Recommendations

- To get our highest rating, use a Custom Dictionary to allow for words that aren't in our dictionary.
- Use comments on our page for possible

Understanding Your Results

Our spell checker will:

- Provide a list of suggested spellings.
- Consider words you list in Custom Dictionary

Figure 25 - Net Mechanic Detail Report

Net mechanic is a great service. There are some excellent paid services available, which include some more serious tools. The price varies you can more details the Net mechanic website. You may want to look into these services a little further down the line.

Now that you've made the changes suggested by net mechanic and you are feeling pretty good about your site, **it's time for some feedback from some real people.**

Pick out 10 friends and relatives that will give you honest feedback about your site. They will most likely have different types of computers and modems. Hopefully at least one has an Apple computer. This will give you good feedback on various systems.

Invite them to visit your site and go through every page in detail. You can even provide them with a checklist to use as they evaluate your site. Tell them to be very critical.

- ✓ Does everything make sense?
- ✓ Is navigation easy?
- ✓ Is the site visually appealing?
- ✓ Is the text easy to read?
- ✓ Were the forms easy to use?
- ✓ Did they get an automatic e-mail response?
- ✓ Did the pages load quickly enough?
- ✓ Was there too much information? If so where?
- ✓ Was the information presented correctly?
- ✓ Was there not enough information? If so what's missing?
- ✓ What is the feel of the site?
- ✓ What impressions did the site leave you with?
- ✓ Was the site talking directly to you?
- ✓ Did you feel comfortable?
- ✓ Is there anything else missing?
- ✓ What should be deleted?
- ✓ Best Features?
- ✓ Worst features?
- ✓ Any annoyances?
- ✓ Would you recommend the site to someone else?
- ✓ Are there any questions left unanswered?

- ✓ Any other general comments or suggestions.

Evaluate the responses and make the changes that make sense. You are building the site for your visitors and not for yourself. Take the questions raised by your testers and begin to compile a FAQ list. After you have 10 good questions, go-ahead and add the FAQ page to your site.

The majority of websites on the Internet did not go through the extensive testing that I am suggesting, and you can really tell. If you're going to take the time and effort to build a website, you might as well do it right, and be rewarded.

Yes, this testing process is intense and involved. But don't you want your site to stand apart from the rest? Implement this testing system and you will launch a site that will be a valuable business tool.

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Step 8 Launch Your Site



5...4...3...2...1...Blast off! It's time to put your site out there for the world to see. You have followed all of the steps and thoroughly tested your site. So now it's ready. Now all you have to do is publish it again with all of your changes in place.

That's really all you do to launch your website. As you know, a lot of effort was exerted to finally get the site ready for this step. You are now able to publish your site for real. Go ahead and publish!

What happened? That's right nothing happened. You're still not quite finished. **You're going to have to let people know about the site before you start getting visitors.**

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Step 9 Promotion



You have to let everyone know that your site is up and running. The promotion strategy you will employ as a Real Estate Jobber is to first let your Investors know that you have a website, then your Network Contacts and finally the Motivated Sellers.

Send each Investor a personal e-mail explaining that you have set up a website to get information to them quicker. In the e-mail include a direct link to your site and information on how useful it will be to them.

Explain that you will post hot property leads including pictures on the website in a special area. Also explain how the process works and where on your site they will be able to find the properties.

You should **send an e-mail alert when you add a new property** to the site. Again be sure to include a direct link to their personal web page in your e-mail. All they will have to do is click the link and it will take them where they need to go.

Let them know that you are now able to accept credit card payment for referral fees. Make sure you stress that it's an option designed to save time and add convenience.

Next you will let your Network Contacts know that you have set up a website for your business. Use the e-mail approach to contact everyone that you have an e-mail address for, and then call the others.

As you did with the Investors, let your contacts know how the site is set up and how they can benefit from it. Let them know about your online referral form and how to complete it.

Finally you will want Motivated Sellers to know about your website. How do you notify Motivated Sellers? Well you include your website address on all of your literature, business cards, postcards, flyers, door hangers etc.

If you are using classified ads, make sure your web address is prominent in the ad. Most of the ads will not have a website, so yours will get noticed. Use all of the principals described earlier to create a page that will hold the interest of Motivated Sellers. Your goal is to get them to complete the consultation form.

Another great way to get the word out to Motivated Sellers is to **give something away free**. Your “free” consultation is a great way to get sellers to your site. Promote the free online consultation in your literature.

You can also give away a free report to your Motivated Sellers. Of course you will have to write the report. An excellent report would be entitled, “How to Avoid Foreclosure and Put Cash in Your Pockets”. You can bet this is an attention getter for Motivated Sellers. Use the pain and gain approach.

Your report should outline the legal foreclosure process for your state, the effect foreclosure will have on their credit report and discuss the fact they will lose their house and get nothing in return.

That’s the pain now explain the gain. You work with a network of Investors who may be able to help by paying cash and closing quickly. Include all of the benefits that they will get by selling to an Investor.

You can make this report a page on your website. Include a link on your home page advertising the report. Something to the effect of, “free report on How to Avoid Foreclosure and Put Cash in your Pockets”.

Put the report on a plain page. There should be no graphics, other than your main navigation bar, at the top of the page. This will make printing the report easier for your sellers.

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Be sure to mention your website name and phone number throughout the report, so this information will be available if they print the report.

If you really want to get fancy you can make the report a file that can be downloaded from your site. E-mail me if you want more information on how to do this, barry@realestatejobber.com.

The Motivated Seller audience will obviously play a major role once you become an Investor. Now is a good time to learn how to market directly to Motivated Sellers.

The online marketing knowledge that you gain will become invaluable to you as an Investor. You will be miles ahead of the average Investor.

You probably think you're done now, right? Well you've almost completed the cycle, but you are far from finished.

Step 10 Feedback and Continuous Improvement



You will literally want to climb inside of your website to make it better. You realize how valuable of a tool your website is, and now understand all of the hard work was worth it.

Now you will actively solicit feedback from all of your users. They will have some good ideas and suggestions for improving your website.

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After all the website was really built for them. Who would know better how to improve it?

Take the best suggestions and implement them into your site. You will start at step one and work the changes through the cycle to insure they are well thought out. This is a cycle that will keep repeating itself.

Since your website serves local customers, consider including some local information that is updated automatically each day. This way you won't have to do the updates yourself and your visitors know your site is alive and well.

A brief weather report is a nice touch, because it's pertinent and affects everyone in your service area. You must be careful not to get carried away and include things like stock reports.

Remember who your audience is. They are having financial difficulties. Only add relevant material that will be of benefit to your audience.

You can get a free tool that places and automatically updates local weather information on your website from weather.com. Use the link below to get more information.



<http://www.weather.com>

Your website is actually never truly finished. Update your website often and, add content that fits your customers needs. A website without change, is a stale website that people will not find appealing.

That's the complete website building process. It takes a lot of work to build a professional website, that will actually be an effective business tool. Don't forget all the benefits that a website can bring to your business and the very cost effective functions it can perform.

Build it and build it the right way!

Next we will take a look at how a website is built, as a Real Estate Jobber goes through the cycle.

BUILDING A JOBBER WEBSITE

I'm sure you remember Joanne Jobber from Volume 3, Real Estate Jobbing in Action. If not please read volume 3 when you get a chance. Joanne (her friends call her Jo) has been a Real Estate Jobber for a little more than 4 months now, and has collected several referral fees.

She now works with 8 Investors and has 5 Network Contacts that look for properties.

Jo has read Real Estate Jobbing and the World Wide Web two times and has decided to build a website for her Jobber business.

In this section items specifically related to Jo's Jobber business will be highlighted in purple text. General comments and lessons will be in black text.

We will have a quick Question and Answer session with Jo to understand some of her thoughts. We will also tag along as she builds her website using this guide.

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Joanne's Q & A Session



Q – Jo, what went into your decision to build a website?

A – I wanted a presence on the web to offer more options and better services to my customers. The Internet will be a major Real Estate Investor tool in the coming years and I wanted to get a head start.

Q – Do you have any experience building websites?

A – Yes, a little. I was involved in a website business a few years ago, but everything has changed so much, it's like starting over again.

Q – How do you plan to use your website?

A – It's a business tool. You know for marketing, customer service, providing information and that type of thing.

Q – How much time will you be able to devote to your site?

A- Probably between 2 and 3 hours the first few nights to get it up and running, and then maybe an hour or less a day.

Q – What type of computer system do you have?

A – My PC is a Pentium 3 and is a couple of years old. I added a high-speed Internet connection and a digital camera. I also have an ink jet printer.

Q – What time frame do you have in mind for launching your site?

A - I estimate it will take about three weeks to get it ready for public viewing.

Q – What site building software will you use?

A - I tried the Microsoft FrontPage free download, and really found the software easy to use. I just ordered the full version. I also downloaded the trial version of Fireworks MX. I've created a

couple of graphics including a logo, but I'm not sure if I will order the full version. It's a bit pricey.

Q – Do you plan on following all of the steps in the guide?

A – Absolutely, it's a proven model. I understand there will be some work involved, but I want a professional looking site, that I can carry over to my Investor business.

Q – Have you picked out a domain name yet?

A – Yes, actually I've already registered ezpropertysolutions.com

Q – Why ezpropertysolutions.com?

A – Well, it's what I want to provide for all of my customers, whether they are an Investor, Motivated Seller, one of my contacts or whoever. I also thought it was a clever play on words that people will remember. I've decided to name my business EZ Property Solutions as well.

Q - Who will host your website?

A – I took the recommendation from the Volume 4 and went with the Business Pro service. They have more features than I could have imagined. I was able to register my domain name for free, customer service is always there and the monthly fee is only \$7.95. Oh yea, they also have a 30-day money back guarantee.

Q – Will you accept credit cards?

A – Yes, again I took the recommendation from the course. I was able to set up a free account. There are no monthly fees; the money is instantly transferred to my account. They do all of the work to verify the transaction. I only have to pay a 3% fee for each transaction.

Q – Have you completed the vision stage yet?

A – No, that's what I'm going to start working on now.

Q – Well I guess it's time to get started, right?

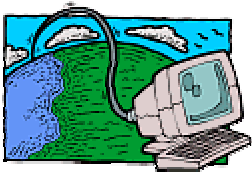
A – Yes, I'm very anxious and excited to get started.

Thank you for your time Jo.

No problem, it was my pleasure.

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What's My Website All About?



Sure the whole world will have access to your website, but what do you want them to see?

This is the first question Jo had to ask herself. She spent the first few evenings working on her website vision. She went through a lot of soul searching to come up with her final version.

There were numerous re-writes before she finally felt good about her vision. Let's take a look at what she came up with.

Website Goals

1. To provide a medium for Investors to get "hot leads" quickly and to have a visual display of the properties available.
2. To provide Investors with the ability to pay my referral fees by credit card.
3. To advertise for new Investors.
4. To provide an efficient method for my Network Contacts to send leads.
5. To advertise for more Network Contacts.

6. To directly advertise to Motivated Sellers and get them to contact me.
7. To be able to continue developing the site to use as a business tool when I branch out as a Real Estate Investor.
8. To attract homebuyers that may be interested in properties that my Investors have for sale.
9. To learn how to work with homebuyers and become familiar with the buying and closing process.

Wow, these are some quite comprehensive and aggressive goals that Joanne has set. Your goals don't have to be this aggressive; it depends on where you are in your Jobber business.

If you are just starting out, you may want to use your website to simply attract Investors and as a way to provide them with leads. Jo has been at it for four months and obviously wants to use her site for several purposes.

The first three goals are useful for all Jobbers. Goal four allows her Network Contacts to submit leads to her anytime day or night. This is an added convenience for her contacts and can increase the number of leads she receives from them.

Similarly her fifth goal will help attract new contacts and increase the size of her network. This is very important for her future plans to become an Investor, as she will have less time to look for leads herself.

Goal six enables her to appeal directly to Motivated Sellers. Any leads that she receives from Motivated Sellers are then submitted directly to

her Investors. So, for just a few seconds of her time she can make between \$500 and \$1,500.

Now that's how you should use a business tool! This will also be of great assistance to Jo when she becomes an Investor.

Her last three goals are almost purely geared toward her future investment business. Goal number eight is something she has been thinking about for a few weeks.

If she can refer potential homebuyers to her Investors, she can charge a referral fee like she does for her Motivated Seller leads. This essentially opens up another stream of income. Again, another excellent use of her website.

Goal number nine is a must to become an Investor. You have to be able to move your properties to make money. This may involve an outright sale, renting the property or lease optioning the property. This is a great way to begin working the homebuyer side of the business with your Mentors/Investors.

These are all excellent goals, but lets see how they fit in with the mission statement she developed for her business a while back.

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Does It All Tie Back to Your Business?

The goals are great, but they must support the reason that she is in business. Otherwise she may be in the wrong business.

Business Purpose

Jo's Jobber business' mission statement is, "To find quality property leads for my Investors through a variety of sources, which meet their needs. To earn extra income while learning the real estate investment business, and to provide easy property solutions for all of my customers".

As you can see all of Jo's website goals support her mission statement. Goals 1 through 3 support finding leads for investors. Goals 4, 5 and 6 are geared towards earning extra income. The last three goals are related to her future investment business.

Jo has also set the following objectives for her website.

- ✓ To improve communication with customers.
- ✓ To increase my referral fee payment options.
- ✓ To attract more quality Investors.
- ✓ To continue building her network of contacts.
- ✓ To attract Motivated Sellers.
- ✓ To attract homebuyers.
- ✓ To prepare to become an Investor.

So the business purposes or reasons of her website are:

- ✓ Communicating with customers
- ✓ Customer Service
- ✓ Finance - to receive referral fee payments
- ✓ Advertising

All very sound business reasons to develop and use this tool. Joanne has certainly justified a business need for the website.

Who will use My Website?

It's now time to define the website's audience. Using the goals of the website Jo has determined the following to be in her audience.

- ✓ Current Investors
- ✓ Future Investors
- ✓ Current Network Contacts
- ✓ Future Network Contacts
- ✓ Motivated Sellers
- ✓ Home Buyers

Are you starting to notice a theme? Jo's goals are driving the planning of her website. The same factors are popping up all throughout the vision process. Guess what? They will continue to pop up throughout the building of the website.

Make sure you give the vision stage of the cycle the proper attention it deserves.

Okay...Jo has put together a concise profile of her audience members. The profile includes a brief description of the target audience, their likes and dislikes, the features they will use the most and how often they will visit the website. Let's take a look.

Current Investors/Future Investors – very busy people with limited time to look for Motivated Sellers. They are interested in maximizing the use of their time, and want to save time whenever possible. They prefer using their time to buy and sell properties. They are not technically advanced for the most part, although most know how to use the Internet and e-mail.

They are usually one-person operations looking for ways to improve the efficiency of their businesses. They spend a lot of time on the road and cover large territories looking at properties.

They like sharing information, saving time, saving money and buying and selling properties. They dislike receiving useless leads, looking for leads and wasting time.

They will use the site to look at property pictures, communicate with me and make referral payments. New investors will use the online form to request leads. They will visit the site as often as needed.

Current Network Contacts/Future Network Contacts –

these are people looking to make a little extra money without interfering with their job. They are not interested in real estate investing. They work in occupations that cause them to travel all over town. Such as, plumbers, couriers, pool service etc.

They don't have a lot of time to look for leads and must find them during the course of their day job. They won't have time to gather a lot of information, so only the street address and condition of the property will be supplied. They will need an easy way to communicate leads.

This group also includes friends and family, who may know people that are Motivated Sellers. They like to make extra money, but won't like dealing with paperwork.

They will use the online lead submission form and the online form to join my network. They will visit the site 2 or 3 times a week to submit leads.

Motivated Sellers – are usually people with financial difficulties that need to sell their house quickly to avoid losing their home and getting nothing in return.

They may also have personal problems, which have placed them in the position of Motivated Sellers. They are distrusting and are suspicious of people trying to take advantage of their situation. They are looking for help and a solution for their problems. They are under a lot of pressure and may need to hear a kind voice.

They will need information and alternatives, not high-pressure sales techniques. Motivated Sellers include, people with double payments for whatever reasons, disgruntled landlords, people facing relocation, divorces and other people with an array of financial problems.

They like getting their problems solved, moving on with their lives, and saving their credit. They don't like high-pressure tactics, having their credit ruined for years, or being treated like second-class citizens.

They will view the information on the website and use the online consultation form. This will allow them to remain anonymous while building trust. They will want to read any special reports that pertain to their situation.

On average they may visit two or three times before submitting the consultation form, or deciding it's just not for them.

However, they may change their mind as the financial pressure builds, and schedule a consultation a little later on.

Home Buyers/Seekers – includes non-traditional buyers in the market for homes. These may be first time buyers or people looking for a rental unit to buy. They want to avoid the extra costs that Real Estate Agents add to the purchase price.

They may need to work out a special deal with the Investors due to poor or no credit. They may want to lease option and try to improve their credit to get a mortgage a couple of years later. They may also require special long-term seller financing that many Investors provide.

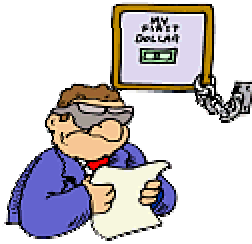
They may be willing to provide "sweat equity" by doing some needed repair work to the home. May include former Motivated Sellers. They will like to view the properties online before setting an appointment to see it.

They will also like the flexibility that some Investors provide and the ability to submit information online. On average they will visit 2 or 3 times before completing the online form to set up an appointment to look at a property.

The profiles that Joanne has put together paint a pretty complete picture of her audience. The design of her site will have to cater to the profiles of her audience, in order for her website to be effective.

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What are My Site's Benefits?



Most people will be selfish when visiting your site, they will simply want to know, “**what’s in it for me**”? Build your site with this in mind and give them what they want, benefits.

You must determine what your visitors will get out of your site. How will the site benefit them? Again, look back at your goals and determine what your customers will gain. Here are the features and benefits for Jo’s website.

Investors

Feature	Benefit
Get “hot” leads online.	Saves time, get immediate access.
Make referral fee payment online.	Provides flexibility, helps cash flow.
Can sign up for leads online.	Begin getting leads sooner.
Personal web page.	Customized communication for each Investor.
Pictures of “hot” leads online.	Will have an idea of what the property looks like and needs before actually seeing the property. May be able to make buy/no buy decisions quicker.

Network Contacts

Feature	Benefit
Online lead submission.	Convenience, can submit leads any time night or day.
Online sign up.	New contacts can learn about the program and get started immediately.
Electronic lead payment.	Convenience of direct deposit.
Monthly Network Newsletter.	Convenience of getting program updates online.
Online tips for lead finding.	Learn how to spot leads easier, use time more effectively.

Motivated Sellers

Feature	Benefit
Online consultation form.	Can submit form at their convenience and remain anonymous.
Free “How to Avoid Foreclosure” e-booklet.	Can read online at their convenience, and use direct links from booklet to go to the consultation form.
Referral Program.	Free online Attorney referrals to reputable professionals for, bankruptcy, divorce etc. Help begin moving life forward.
Online information.	Will gain an understanding of some of the options available.
Out of Area Realtor® link.	Convenience for people relocating, they can get a head start learning the real estate market of their new community.

Home Buyers

Feature	Benefit
Online consultation form.	Convenience, can submit form anytime anonymously.
Search for properties online at home	Convenience of looking at property pictures online, and save time by only looking at homes of interest.
Mortgage Rate Tool	Convenience of getting comparative loan rates at one location.
Loan Calculators	Convenience of calculating loan payments while looking at properties.
Set up appointment online	Convenience of requesting an appointment on-line to see properties.

Convenience and timesaving are extremely important benefits to the entire audience. Conveying these benefits in the website will help assure its success as a business tool.

Final Vision Considerations

There are several other considerations that Joanne had when determining her vision. Let's take a look at each one.

How will success be judged – the success of the site will be judged by...

- ✓ The number of Investors who use the "hot" leads personal pages
- ✓ The number of Investors who sign up
- ✓ The number of referral fees paid online
- ✓ The number of network contacts that use the online submission form
- ✓ The number of new contacts that sign up
- ✓ The number of Motivated Seller leads generated
- ✓ The amount of referral fees from these leads
- ✓ The number of buyers which request appointments
- ✓ The feedback from all audience members
- ✓ Using the web stats to see how many people are visiting each page
- ✓ By the number of online forms completed on all pages
- ✓ By the amount of income attributed to the website

Technical Limitations – since I'm doing this project myself the limitations are my own skills. At this point I can include interactive forms but not database elements.

What computer system will visitors use – systems that are 1 to 2 years old, mid range in power, memory and price. They are mostly PC users, but there are also a few Mac users.

How will they connect to the Internet – the majority will still have dial up connections, and a few will have high-speed connections. I must design the site for slow connections.

What's the name of the website – ezpropertyolutions.com

Tagline - ...for everyone



Is there a logo – yes.

What e-mail accounts will be set up –

jo@ezpropertyolutions.com

mike@ezpropertyolutions.com

service@ ezpropertyolutions.com

info@ ezpropertyolutions.com

jobber@ ezpropertyolutions.com

investor@ ezpropertyolutions.com

homebuyer@ ezpropertyolutions.com

homeseller@ ezpropertyolutions.com

Jo has covered all of her customers with personalized e-mail accounts and some general accounts such as service, info and of course the Jo address for personal communications.

How will multiple e-mail accounts be managed– Eudora Pro.

Target Launch date - 2.5 weeks.

What is your plan for growth – to use the site for my future real estate investment business.

How often will you update – initially about every two days, then about once a week as my content starts to settle.

What is the image you are seeking – informative, friendly, professional and results oriented.

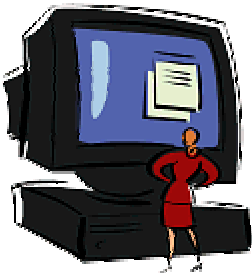
There you have it, Jo's vision for her website. There is a lot of work involved to come up with a vision this clear. Your business is similar so you can use this as a template and customize it to fit your needs.

Make sure your vision centers around your audience and their needs. You can see how Jo's plan keeps the needs of her audience front and center at all times.

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What should I include in my website?

Why would anyone want to read your website?



Simply because of the wonderful content you will provide.

Content is another important consideration. You must decide what pages are needed to provide the benefits to your audience. Let's look at the pages that Jo's website will have.

Home Page – this is where most visitors will enter and see what's available on the site.

FAQ Page– frequently asked questions to answer common questions posed by visitors. Provides immediate answers and saves Jo time, since she won't have to respond to the same questions repeatedly.

Privacy Statement – will spell out Jo's privacy policy and help build trust with visitors.

Contact Us Page– will list all of Jo's vital contact information.

Feedback Form– an online form that will allow visitors to enter comments about the website. Feedback is important for making improvements to the site. Improvements are always based on the customer's needs.

About Us page – a page summarizing my business philosophy.

Investors Page– a general information page for potential investors with a link to the sign up form.

Investor Personal Pages – a personalized page of leads for each Investor.

Investor Sign Up form – an online form for Investors to sign up to receive leads.

Investor Payment form – details the fee schedule and has a link to the credit card merchant account.

Home Seller Page – information based page for Motivated Sellers with a link to the consultation form, and a sign up form to receive a free e-booklet.

Consultation Request form – online form to request a consultation for Motivated Sellers.

E-book Form – allows Motivated Sellers to request a free e-book report.

Home Buyer Page – general information for homebuyers, with a link to the properties page.

Properties Page – photo album pages with pictures and descriptions of the properties for sale.

Consultation Request form – online form to request a consultation for homebuyers.

Network Contacts Page– a general information page on how the program works, the payment arrangements and a link to the sign up form.

Sign Up form – an online form to allow new contacts to sign up.

Lead Submission form – allows contacts to submit leads online.

The site is made up of pages and forms. The pages will have content based on the features and benefits that were identified earlier. The forms are information gatherers used to automatically take information and send an immediate reply to the customers.

The next step is to create a feature outline for each page. That's easy, since we already know the features. When the pages are actually written the benefits will be filled in. The page should consist entirely of features and benefits. Let's take a look at Jo's outline of the information based pages.

1. Investor Page

- a. Leads available online
- b. Make referral fee payments online
- c. Easy to sign up
- d. Receive a personal web page
- e. View "hot" leads online

Seller Page

- a. Information on options
- b. Online consultation form
- c. Free e-booklet
- d. Referral to attorneys
- e. Out of town real estate help

Contacts Page

- a. Program updates

- b. Submit leads online
- c. Sign up online
- d. Direct deposit option
- e. Lead finding tips

Buyer Page

- a. Online consultation form
- b. Property pictures
- c. Mortgage rates
- d. Loan calculators
- e. Set up appointments to see properties

The home page will contain very little information. It will primarily have an introduction, and links to the other pages. The home page will load faster if the images are kept to a minimum. This is where most of your visitors will enter the site.

The FAQ page will be a series of questions that you anticipate your audience will ask. Some examples are:

Investors FAQ

- ✓ How do you get your leads?
- ✓ Are your leads qualified?

Motivated Sellers FAQ

- ✓ How much will I get for my property?
- ✓ Will there be any cash for me?

Network Contact FAQ

- ✓ How many leads can I find?
- ✓ How often will I be paid?

Home Buyer FAQ

- ✓ Do you offer financing?
- ✓ Is there a down payment required?

You should have a separate section on the FAQ page for each audience. Better yet have a separate page for each. As you get new questions from your customers add the useful questions to the page and save yourself a little time.

The Contact us page should contain every possible way to contact you, including your mailing address. You can also set up a form that allows the user to e-mail questions to you. The easiest way initially is to just list all of your contact information, and let your visitors contact you, through the method that is most convenient for them.

The About us page is your chance to talk about yourself and explain how you provide solutions to their problems. Let people know about your win-win business philosophy. You can begin earning their trust. This is the only spot on the website where you talk about yourself and your business, everywhere else you want to focus on your user.

The Personal Investor pages will contain property leads. Investors will only have access to their personal page. This is accomplished by giving each Investor a specific web page address to use. There are no direct links to these pages they will have to use a specific link that you e-mail to them, or type in a specific address to access their page.

A Free E-booklet Report will have to be created by you and set up for online viewing and printing, or electronic distribution. You can develop more than one report. In fact you may want to develop a report for each customer segment.

The Privacy Statement is simply a page, which spells out your privacy policy, and how you will use the information that you collect. It should assure your visitors that their information is safe with you.

The remaining forms are simply set up to capture the information needed from your visitors, and help you to provide the best services possible.

The content is now defined for the entire website. It will be easy to write your content from this outline, once you reach this point.

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How will Visitors Move Around My Site?

As we discussed earlier navigation is the ability for visitors to move around the website. Navigation is very important, as it will dictate how visitors get from one page to the next. It must be simple and logical. Let's take a look at Joanne's navigation plan.

The primary page links will be displayed at the top and bottom of each page. The primary pages include the Home, About Us, FAQ, and Contact Us pages.

The user specific page links will be in a table of contents style graphic on the left side of the page. The user specific pages include, Investors, Home Sellers, Network Contacts and Home Buyers. These page links will not be on every page, only the pertinent pages.

Each page will contain a page banner, so the visitor always knows which page they are currently on.

All links will be simple text based to keep the page sizes small.

On the bottom of every page will be the main e-mail address, a link to the privacy statement, the mailing address and copyright information.

After completion of a form the visitor will automatically be taken to a thank you page, which assures the visitor that we have received their information. The thank you page will have a link back to the home page.

It's a nice simple plan that will allow visitors to easily move around the site. You don't need anything fancy for the navigation functions. Visitors on your site simply want to be able to move from page to page quickly and easily. Remember the **KIS** principle.

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What Should My Site Look Like?



You'll want to paint a pretty picture.

We talked about the dos and don'ts of visual design in great detail earlier.

Let's take a peek at Jo's visual design plan.

The background color will be white. The text will be dark blue and black. Headline text will be in the georgia font and dark blue. The body text will be in the verdana font and black. These fonts are very easy to read online.

The only graphic on the home page will be a picture of a professional businesswoman taking care of a customer's problem on the phone. This will only appear on the home page.

The logo will be part of the top navigation bar, which will also serve as a page banner, and appear on every page except the forms.

The table of contents buttons will have a dark blue background and white text. I have also created a small graphic of a book to represent the free report I have developed to give a way.

Each page will be small and contain plenty of white space to keep load time to a minimum.

A template will be set up to use for all new page building. This will keep the look consistent from page to page. The template will consist of tables, which will hold the text and pictures.

Again, Jo has developed a very simple plan for the visual design of her site. The background is white and the text will be dark. There will be minimal graphics, which will allow the pages to load quickly.

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Consistency will be assured by using templates to create each new page.

Once your visual design is completed you can build the template page. First sketch the page out on a notepad, and then begin designing it on your web authoring software. It won't be perfect the first time, but keep tinkering with it until you are satisfied.

Jo's template page is shown in figure 26.

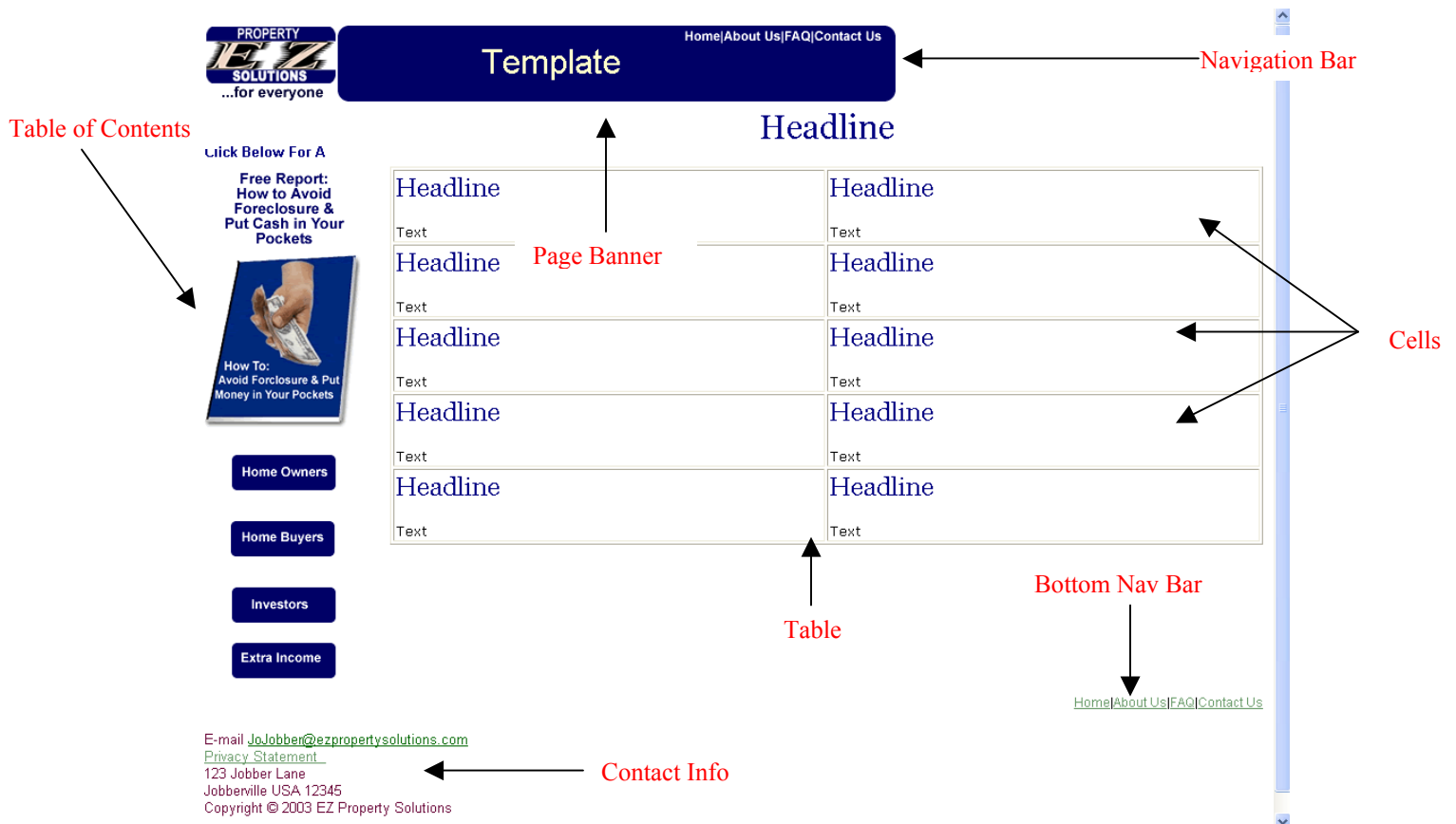


Figure 26 - Jo Jobber Template Web Page

The top of the page contains the main navigation bar. This will appear on each page and includes the logo, the page banner and links to the primary pages.

The middle of the page is where the content will appear. There are 10 cells within the table on the page. Content or graphics can appear in the cells. A table based layout keeps the pages neat and organized.

Simply type your text in the tables, and the cell size will adjust based on the amount of content it contains. You can add or delete cells as needed. You can also set the border size to 0 and the cell borderlines will not appear on your site.

The bottom of the pages contains Jo's basic contact information. Notice the e-mail address is set as a hyperlink. The user can simply click on the link to send Jo an e-mail. A link to the privacy statement is also available here.

There is another navigation bar in the bottom portion of the page for the visitor's convenience. This section will appear at the bottom of every page.

The left side of the page contains the table of contents. These are the links to the customer specific pages. The table of contents will appear on most, but not all pages.

Jo has also decided to include a link to receive her free report in the table of contents. The book graphic is a nice touch. It will allow the visitor to visualize what the report looks like and make it seem more tangible.

This is a very clean layout that will work well for a Jobber business. It's a design that's easy to navigate, visually appealing and easy to read. Follow this game plan and your site will be a great tool. Of course you will have to develop a look and feel that you are comfortable with, and fits the image you are trying to present.

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Time to Storyboard the Site

Okay, a page template has been developed and will serve as the framework for each page. The storyboard or map will show how all of the pages relate. As I mentioned earlier you can use sticky notes to create your storyboard. However, FrontPage includes a storyboard feature. Let's take a look at Jo's storyboard.

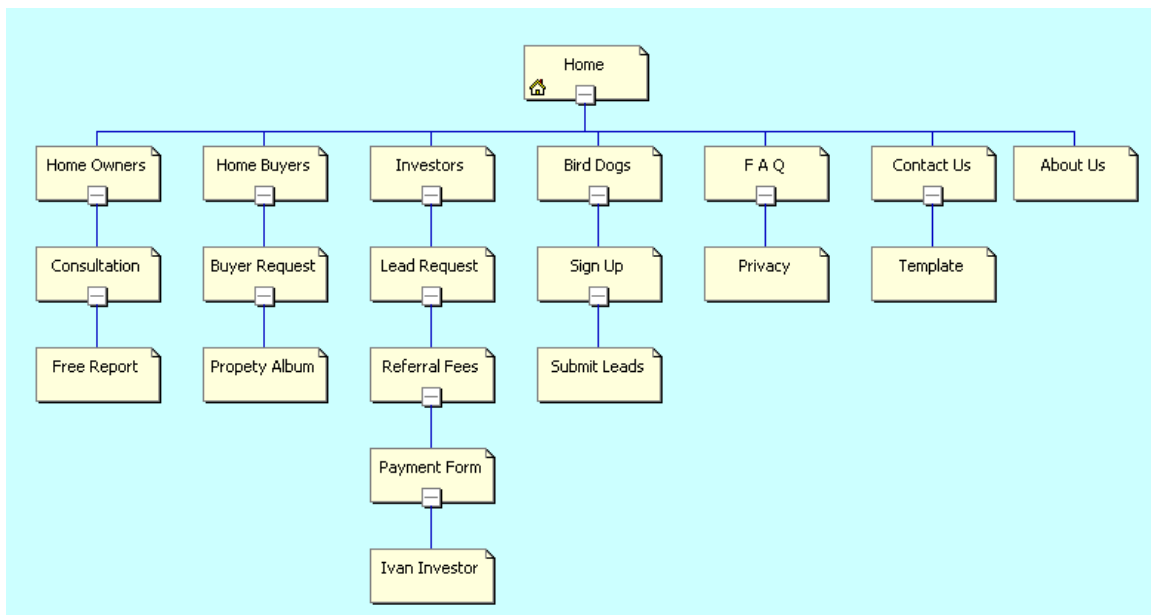


Figure 27 - Jo Jobber's Site Storyboard

The storyboard includes all the pages on the site. You might notice that not all pages appear on the navigation bar or table of contents. The forms will be accessed through their main topic pages.

For instance the sign up form for the Network Contacts is accessed through the birddog page. Jo elected to name her page for Network Contacts, "Bird Dogs".

The page entitled "Ivan Investor", is a personal web page for Ivan. Ivan is the only person who can access this page, since only he (besides Jo) knows the page address.

Next we are going to take a look at a few of Jo's pages after she finalized her content.

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What Should My Web Pages Include?

I think you already know the answer to that question. The content outline was already developed. It's basically a matter of connecting the dots, and filling in the benefits that were identified. Let's take a look at a few of Jo's pages and see how she did.

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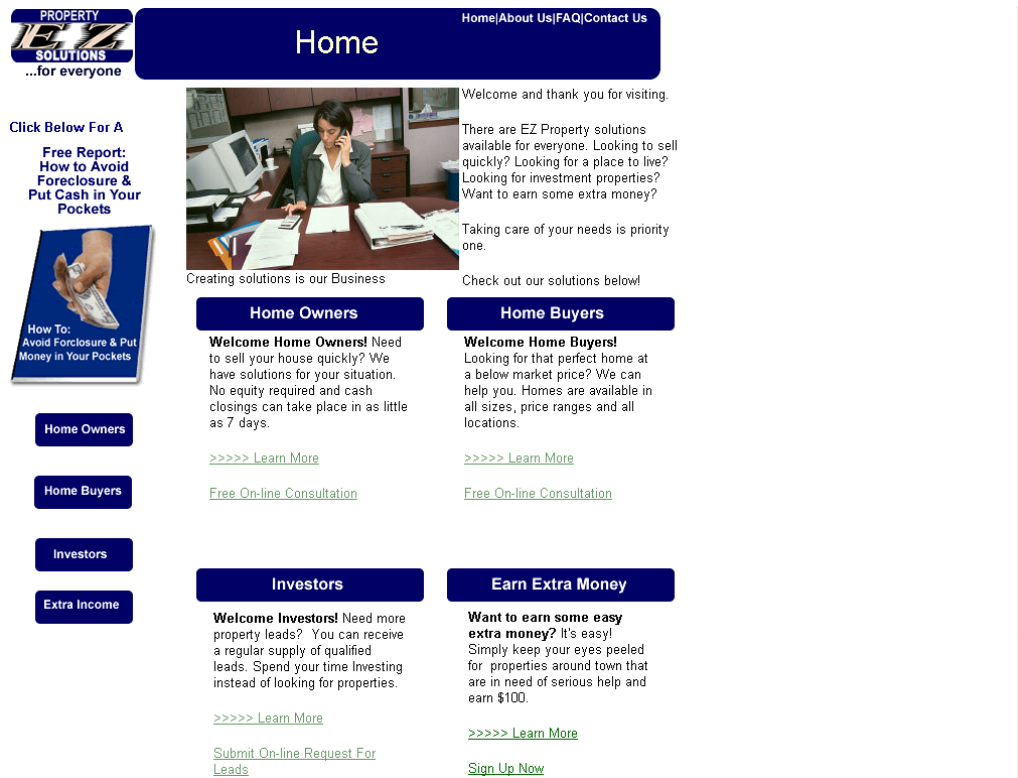


Figure 28 - Jo Jobber's Home Page

The layout looks good. The home page is the entry point and should let the visitor know what the site is all about. The picture fits in well, and the caption connects the reader. There is a nice welcome message to the right of the picture.

Notice how Jo has set up four distinct entry points for her audience. Each gives a preview of what is contained in that area. There is a link inviting visitors to learn more.

There is also another link that the visitor can click and go directly to the various forms. This link is useful for returning visitors. They can access the online forms directly from the home page.

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Since they've probably already read the information, they can now skip directly to the forms. Always think about the convenience of your visitors.

The four entry points have the same basic look and feel for each section; a brief spiel about the page, a "Learn More" link and a direct link to the online form. Consistency makes your visitors feel comfortable. Let's see what happens when you click on the "Learn More" link for Investors.

PROPERTY EZ SOLUTIONS
...for everyone

Home|About Us|FAQ|Contact Us

Investors

Leads That Get Results

Click Below For A

Free Report:
How to Avoid
Foreclosure &
Put Cash in Your
Pockets

How To:
Avoid Foreclosure & Put
Money in Your Pockets

Home Owners

Home Buyers

Investors

Extra Income

Finding leads that meet your needs is my specialty. Every Investor has a preferred niche that yields the best results. My goal is to deliver consistent high quality leads for you to pursue.

To achieve this goal a stringent qualification process is used to screen unmotivated sellers, which saves you time and money.

Weekly Lead Submission

You will receive leads each week that meet your specifications. Leads are sent electronically in a spreadsheet format for your convenience.

Each lead will contain all pertinent information including:

- ◆ Owner Name, Address, Phone Number (if listed)
- ◆ Property Address
- ◆ Lead Type - Foreclosure, Vacant, FSBO, etc.
- ◆ Square Feet
- ◆ Delinquent Taxes
- ◆ Purchase Date & Amount
- ◆ Tax Assessed Value
- ◆ Estimated FMV Based on Recent Comparable Sales
- ◆ Detailed comments such as property condition

Technology at it's Best

You will also receive a special personal web page on this site. When I run across a "hot" lead, a picture and the detailed information will be posted on your page.

This process helps you to act on the lead quickly.

Figure 29 - Jo Jobber's Investors Page

The Investor page contains all of the benefits and features the Jo identified earlier. It talks directly to the user, and only contains information that is geared toward the user.

The paragraphs are short, benefited oriented and concise. The headlines are attention getting, and the text is very easy to read. Notice the bullet points. The blue horizontal lines are used to divide the page into readable segments. The color contrast works very well and there is plenty of white space.

What's that, you don't see all the benefits? Well let's take a look at the bottom half of the page.

Technology at it's Best

You will also receive a special personal web page on this site. When I run across a "hot" lead, a picture and the detailed information will be posted on your page.

This process helps you to act on the lead quickly.

Compensation

The referral fee is only payable if you buy one of the properties that I refer to you.

2003 Referral Fee Schedule

1% of the purchase price with a \$500.00 minimum and \$1,500.00 maximum.

Credit cards are accepted for your convenience.



Please complete the Investor Information Form. This will allow me to build a profile of the types of leads you prefer. Once I receive the form I will contact you for a meeting.

[Investor Information Form](#)

[Home](#)[About Us](#)[FAQ](#)[Contact Us](#)

E-mail JoJobber@ezpropertyolutions.com
[Privacy Statement](#)
123 Jobber Lane
Jobberville USA 12345
Copyright © 2003 EZ Property Solutions

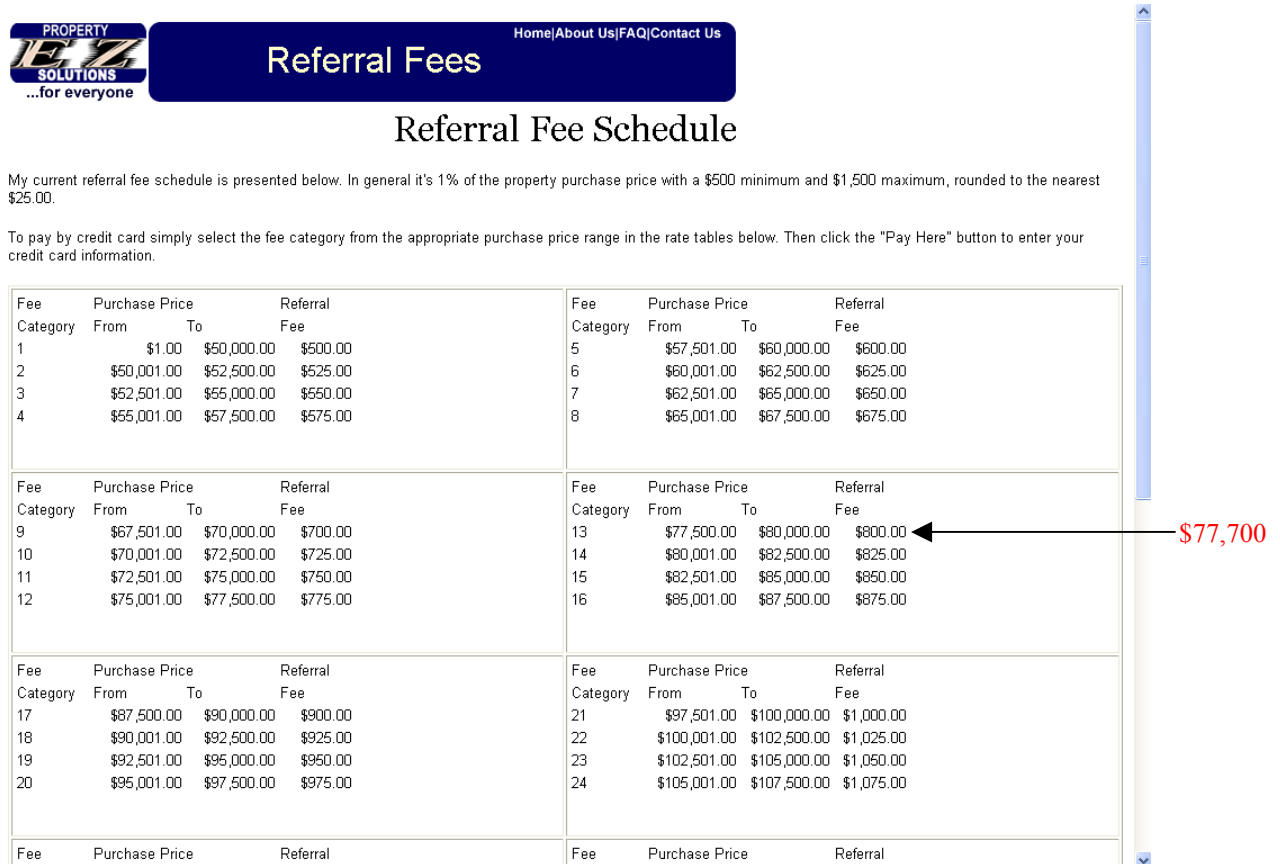
A general referral fee range of \$500 to \$1,500 is explained and Jo includes a direct link to her current referral fee schedule. This page will detail her fees and methods of payment.

Jo also makes it clear that the fees are only payable if the Investor is able to buy the property that Jo referred. Notice the credit card logos? This will definitely be an eye opener for many investors.

There is also a link to the online form to request Jo's Jobber services. This form is basically the Investor Evaluation Form, but the name was changed slightly, since the Investor will see the form.

Would you like to take a look at Jo's current referral fee schedule?

Okay, let's click and look!



Fee Category	Purchase Price From	Purchase Price To	Referral Fee
1	\$1.00	\$50,000.00	\$500.00
2	\$50,001.00	\$52,500.00	\$525.00
3	\$52,501.00	\$55,000.00	\$550.00
4	\$55,001.00	\$57,500.00	\$575.00
5	\$57,501.00	\$60,000.00	\$600.00
6	\$60,001.00	\$62,500.00	\$625.00
7	\$62,501.00	\$65,000.00	\$650.00
8	\$65,001.00	\$67,500.00	\$675.00
9	\$67,501.00	\$70,000.00	\$700.00
10	\$70,001.00	\$72,500.00	\$725.00
11	\$72,501.00	\$75,000.00	\$750.00
12	\$75,001.00	\$77,500.00	\$775.00
13	\$77,501.00	\$80,000.00	\$800.00
14	\$80,001.00	\$82,500.00	\$825.00
15	\$82,501.00	\$85,000.00	\$850.00
16	\$85,001.00	\$87,500.00	\$875.00
17	\$87,501.00	\$90,000.00	\$900.00
18	\$90,001.00	\$92,500.00	\$925.00
19	\$92,501.00	\$95,000.00	\$950.00
20	\$95,001.00	\$97,500.00	\$975.00
21	\$97,501.00	\$100,000.00	\$1,000.00
22	\$100,001.00	\$102,500.00	\$1,025.00
23	\$102,501.00	\$105,000.00	\$1,050.00
24	\$105,001.00	\$107,500.00	\$1,075.00

Figure 30 - Jo Jobber's Fee Schedule

Jo has chosen a very interesting referral fee strategy. She charges 1% of the purchase price; the minimum being \$500 and the maximum is \$1,500, and the fee is rounded to the nearest \$25.

To make it even easier she has included a complete fee schedule, which spells out exactly how much is due based on the purchase price.

For instance if an investor purchased a home for \$77,700, we would find the range this amount falls in. This price is in Fee Category 13 and yields a referral fee amount of \$800. Could it be any more convenient for the Investor?

At the bottom of the page (not shown) is a link to the credit card page, and a button to take them back to the Investor page.

Since we looked at the consultation form and network contact form earlier, let's now take a look at the Investor Information Form.

**PROPERTY
EZ
SOLUTIONS**

Investor Information Form

Company Name:

Office Phone: Cell Phone:

E-mail Address:

Contact Name:

What Types of Properties do You Prefer: What Part of Town do You Prefer:

Preferred Price Range: Minimum Maximum

Types of Sellers Preferred - Check all that apply
FSBO ☐ FRBO ☐ OOA Owner ☐ Pre Foreclose ☐ Abandoned ☐ REO ☐
Divorce ☐ Bankruptcy ☐ Probate ☐ Other

Any Other Information I Should Have

Please click the submit button. You will receive an e-mail conformation and I will call to schedule an appointment. I look for to working with you.

Figure 31 - Jo Jobber's Investor Eval Form

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This is basically your Investor Evaluation Form and you should already be familiar with it. There is plenty of free text space for Investors to include as much information as they want.

As with the other forms the Investors will receive automatic confirmation by e-mail. As great as technology is, don't forget to follow up with all of your new Investors personally and explain how your business operates. Let them know when you will have their first leads available.

Investors still require a personal touch, but won't it be great to have Investors contacting you and completing the form for you?

There is one more page I would like you to take a look at, the Investor's personal web page. You will want to create a page like this for every Investor. Set up a template and it will only take you a matter of minutes to build each investor's page.

Let's look at Ivan's page to see a sample of how Jo set up her personal Investor web pages.

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PROPERTY
EZ
SOLUTIONS
...for everyone

Home|About Us|FAQ|Contact Us

Ivan Investor

Welcome

Welcome Ivan, this your personal investor page. I will post hot leads that meet your needs on this page. You can take action immediately on these properties

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

[Click Here to Pay a Referral Fee Online](#)

Investor News

Interest rates are now at an all time low.... There were 135 foreclosures filed last week... The next tax auction is on Friday....Last mints average home selling price for the county was \$125,000

Hot Leads



1161 Dot Ave
John Jones (123) 456-7890
950 square feet
Currently Vacant
Purchased 12/91 - \$45,000
Comp Sales \$65,000
Taxes are current

House is located in a good neighborhood and is the only vacant house in the area. There appears to be some fire damage, but the yard is well kept. Located in good school district.

[Home|About Us|FAQ|Contact Us](#)

E-mail JoJobber@ezpropertysolutions.com
123 Jobber Lane
Jobberville USA 12345
Copyright © 2003 EZ Property Solutions

Figure 32 - Jo Jobber's Investor Personal Page

Again this is a very well set up page. The theme is consistent with the rest of the site. The page banner personalizes the page to Ivan. There is a nice welcome message, and of course a link to pay a referral fee.

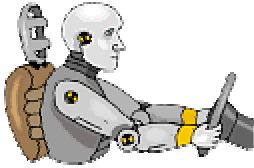
Another nice touch is the "Investor News" section. It's just some very basic information that she has available at her fingertips.

The hot lead includes a picture and description of the property. The hot leads should be added to the Investor's page as soon as possible, and the Investor notified by e-mail or voice mail.

The pages we have looked at in this section were from Jo's finished website, but she had to do a lot of testing to get to this point. Next we will review her testing methods.

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Let's Take it for a Test Drive!



The first time Jo read over her pages there were numerous spelling errors, missing words, and sentences that just didn't make sense. Jo spent a couple of hours correcting mistakes on every page. As she read one word at a time the mistakes jumped out at her.

The next evening Jo read over every page again, this time out loud. There were far fewer spelling mistakes, but many of the sentences still did not flow very well when read aloud. The sentences were often too long and drifted from the point.

Jo spent another 2 or 3 hours making corrections, shortening her sentences, cutting out excess words. She realized that she had to be concise and to the point. No one wants to read a novel on a website.

Jo then copied and pasted each page from her web site into her PC602 Text word processor, which came with her Biz Toolz. She then used the text to speech feature to proofread her web pages.

As the computer read the pages she followed along and marked her mistakes with a red pen. Once again Jo went back to her website and made the necessary changes.

Now Jo was feeling very comfortable with her content. She read through every page and recorded the reading. The playback actually sounded pretty good. She noticed a few awkward sentences, but for the most part she had included all of the benefits and cut out the fat.

It was time to test the different web browsers. She already used the Internet Explorer and it worked fine. She downloaded Netscape, and again her site worked just fine. Even though the site tested fine on both browsers, there will still be variations from computer to computer.

Jo then published her site and gave it the netmechanic test run. She had a couple of links that did not work, a few misspelled words, and it loaded a little slower than she wanted.

She corrected the spelling errors and fixed the broken links. She also used netmechanic's graphic optimizer to reduce the files size of the picture and other images. This reduced the load speed to an acceptable level.

Next was a critical reading by some outsiders. She started with her husband Mike, her sister and her 8-year-old daughter. That's right an 8 year old, remember the words should be as simple as possible.

Jo also had 6 of her friends and 2 of Mike's friends read through the site. The friends received an evaluation form to complete. To Jo's surprise it took almost two weeks to get all of the forms back, which put her a week behind schedule.

The site was well received; there were very few comments about spelling and grammar. Everyone liked the simple layout and found navigation quite easy. While the information was well presented there were a lot of questions on the content.

Jo was a bit surprised, but also understood that no one was as familiar with the subject matter as she was. She simplified as much as she could. The remaining questions were included on the FAQ page.

After nearly two weeks of testing and countless rewrites and corrections the site was finally ready to launch!

Don't overlook the importance of testing. Get all of the bugs worked out before your customers find them. Simple mistakes can cause you to lose credibility. Test, test, test and then test some more.

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Let's Tell the World!



Jo was now ready to let everyone know about her website. Her strategy was as follows.

- ✓ New business cards to include the web address.
- ✓ E-mails to all Investors inviting them to visit the site.
- ✓ E-mails to all Network Contacts inviting them to visit the site.
- ✓ The kids will pass out flyers to homes in her target neighborhoods.
- ✓ Ads to be placed in two weekly classified ad publications.
- ✓ Bandit signs to include web address.

Of course Jo will have to continue to make improvements based on the feedback she receives from users. Jo's skills will also increase the more she works on her website. She is poised very well to grow her website to meet all of the goals she set for it.

We have seen the building of a website from the ground up. This is something you can definitely do, but it will take some effort. Be sure to do the upfront vision planning, it will make the rest of the cycle much easier.

Even if someone else were to build your website, you will still have to go through the site building cycle. After all, no one knows your business as well as you. How could anyone else build your website, without you doing all of the hard work? That's why I recommend you start out building your own website.

You may want to hire a professional down the road to get a more sophisticated and polished look. As an investor you may not have time to give your website the attention that it needs. Going through this process will shorten the development time and save you money.

Keep it simple and just present the information that your audience needs. Make your site as user friendly as possible and update it often. Remember it's a business tool, not a novelty. Used correctly it can save you enormous amounts of time, and give your business a more professional image.

Next we will take a look at some advanced applications for your website. Don't be afraid to try them!

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MULTIPLE STREAMS OF INCOME

The goal of course is to create **multiple streams of income**, with all of them flowing back to you.

As you become more familiar with your website, you may want to branch out to some other uses for it. While your primary business is real estate jobbing, there may be some other related opportunities that your website can help you with.

I'll give you a few ideas that you may want to consider and I'm sure you will think of others that make sense for your market. This business is all about creativity, from lead finding sources to referral fee payments, to your website development.

Understand the business you are in and your market, then think creatively on how best to serve the needs of your customers.

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Stream Number 1

Start a Subscription Service

A subscription service provides information to customers on a regular basis for a prepaid fee. My suggestion would be to offer a foreclosure subscription service. If finding foreclosure leads is not your strongpoint or is difficult in your area, then this may be a perfect opportunity.

Find out how many investors would be interested in receiving foreclosure leads electronically **daily**. The keyword is daily. This is a

valuable service. Each day they will receive foreclosure leads in their e-mail.

You can charge each Investor \$20 a month for this service, payable in quarterly installments. Do you think there will be a demand for this kind of service at \$20 a month? You bet there will be. Don't worry; it's not as difficult as you think.

Here's what you do. Go to <http://www.realtytrac.com/>.



They will do all of the work for you. For \$24.95 a month you can have access to a daily report of newly filed foreclosures all over the county. You can then turn this information around to all of the Investors who have subscribed to your service.

Your service will save them \$5 a month, even if they know about RealtyTrac, and you will deliver the leads directly to them by e-mail. The Investors will not even have to go to a website to get the leads. So you are saving them time and money, which is quite a good combination.

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Let's take a look at RealtyTrac's website.

The screenshot shows the RealtyTrac website interface. At the top is the RealtyTrac logo with the tagline "Tap into the hidden market of **Foreclosure** Real Estate." Below the logo is a navigation bar with links: Join, Search, Testimonials, FREE Credit Report (marked with a "new" badge), and Online Help. The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there is a "Member Login" box with fields for Username and Password, a "Go" button, and a "Forgot Password?" link. Below this is an "Online Help" section with links for Foreclosure Overview, Online Help, FAQ, and Credit Center. A "Need Help?" section features a small image of a person and a link to "Click here to chat live with customer service". At the bottom left is a "Credit Center" section with a link to "Click Here to find out about our **FREE** Experian Credit Report". The right side of the page features a "Welcome to RealtyTrac" heading, followed by a paragraph about discovering the hidden market in real estate foreclosure. Below this is a search prompt: "Start Searching for a Foreclosed home in your area: Click on a state below or enter your city & state or zip code." This is accompanied by a map of the United States with state abbreviations and a search input field with a "Search" button.

Figure 33 - Realtytrac Website

They cover every State and there are hundreds of new listings everyday. I know what you are thinking, "boy this sounds good, but it's going to be a lot of work". Not so fast my friend!

RealtyTrac has already set up the reports. You can get all of the foreclosures in a given state, city, county or zip code. It's a simple search; just plug in your criteria and you will have the reports in a matter of minutes.

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Here's a sample of search results.

The Source for Distressed Real Estate Data on the Web.

Join | Testimonials | Support Center

Tap into the hidden market of real estate.

Register Today!
using our Secure Server,
or by Fax.

Need Help?
Click here
for our
Online Help!

1-888-444-3336

Already Registered?
LOGIN here

User ID
Password

go!

forget your password?

Select your page

Free E-Mail Here!
Our FREE Brochure

Sort by: Record date Descending Update

Display: 10 records per page.

Displaying 1 - 10 of 313 records found in Alachua County.
10 records per page. Sorted by: Recording Date

Tags	Entered On	Prop ID	Status	Type	City, State	Address	Price	Beds	Baths	Map
☐	2/22/2003	1998884	REO	RSFR	Gainesville, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$63,000.00	3	2	Map
☐	2/22/2003	1998472	REO	RSFR	Gainesville, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$40,000.00	2	1	Map
☐	2/21/2003	1994363	REO	RSFR	Gainesville, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$0.00	3	2	Map
☐	2/21/2003	1995050	REO	RSFR	Gainesville, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$0.00	2	1	Map
☐	2/20/2003	1998268	REO	RSFR	Gainesville, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$0.00	3	2	Map
☐	2/20/2003	1998878	REO	RSFR	Gainesville, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$0.00	2	1	Map
☐	2/21/2003	1993213	LIS	RSFR	ALACHUA, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$7,000.00	0	0	Map
☐	2/21/2003	1993214	LIS	RSFR	GAINESVILLE, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$34,800.00	2	1	Map
☐	2/21/2003	1993216	LIS	RSFR	GAINESVILLE, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$214,700.00	4	3	Map
☐	2/21/2003	1992941	LIS	RMOB	ARCHER, FL	REGISTER NOW!	\$52,300.00	0	3	Map

Result Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 [NEXT]>>]

Select All: ☐

Report Type: One Line Download Type: Comma Delimited

Click here to also check our "Hot Properties" data (trustee's sales ready for auction) for Florida!

Homecenter.net

Click Here to see how!

Information provided herein is deemed accurate, but not guaranteed.
Please consult all relevant title documents prior to purchase.

Figure 34 - Realty Trac Search Results

The key to making this easy is pointed out in red above. The "Download Type" is the key. This will allow you to download the records in an electronic file. You can download up to 200 records at a time, which should be plenty if you are sending the new foreclosure leads daily.

You will simply send the file that you downloaded to the Investors. This should only take 15 minutes of your time each day. Here's how:

1. Download the report.
2. Create an e-mail with a subject line that says "Here's your Leads for the day". Include a quick message thanking them for using your service.
3. Have all your subscribers in a separate e-mail address book. Select them all, and use the "bcc" line instead of the "to" line. This will send a private copy to each recipient. No one will be able to tell whom you are sending the report to. One e-mail takes care of all of your subscribers.
4. Attach the file(s) from RealtyTrac.
5. Click the send button.

That's it; all of your subscribers will receive the file from one simple e-mail.

If you find 50 Investors interested in this service. That would yield you \$1000 a month in subscription revenue. Deduct your RealtyTrac fee of \$25 that leaves \$975 for about 7.5 hours of work each month. This equals \$11,700 for the year, or about \$130 per hour! Not too shabby.

Your website is the place for Investors to sign up. They will pay 3 months at a time, and your merchant account will automatically bill them every 3 months. Once you get it set up it works on autopilot.

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Stream Number 2

Rent Space on Your Website

With all the work it takes to build a website, you can probably understand why most Investors don't have one. Well you may have

the answer. The advertising value of the Internet is unparalleled; you know all of the benefits by now.

Allow your Investors to take advantage of it, without the effort and expense of building a website. If you use the web hosting service suggested in this guide you will have more than enough space for your website. In fact you will have enough space for thousands of small business websites.

Here's what you do. Offer to rent Investors space on your website for say \$25 a month, again paid quarterly. They will get a webpage that says whatever they want (in good taste of course), and an online information request form that their visitors can complete.

The results from the form can be automatically forwarded to the Investor.

For only \$25 a month the Investor can now include a website address on their cards, bandit signs, flyers, magnetic signs etc. They will get more responses because people can anonymously check out their information and request an appointment on line. If you work at it I'm sure you can drum up some interest in this service.

Again it all starts with your website. Set up a form that allows them to sign up online, your merchant account will collect the \$75 and bill them every 3 months.

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You will set up a template page that will be consistent for every Investor. Once you get the information from the Investor plug it into the page, have them proof read it, make changes and publish.

Once your template is set up it should take you no longer than 30 minutes to set up an Investor's web page, and they can all use the same online form. Of course any changes during the quarter will cost them extra.

A company named ABC Investments would have a web address that looks something like this,
<http://www.HomeSOS.com/ABCInvestments> (Home SOS would be the name of the Jobber website). Be sure to choose a domain name that will be appealing to your Investors.

If you find 50 Investors to subscribe, you will yield \$3,750 for the quarter. You will have spent 25 hours of time setting up the pages and spent \$23.85 (\$7.95) per month on hosting. You have just earned about \$149 per hour. Of course your hosting is also serving your Jobber website, what a deal!

Using the same approach you can offer to also include pictures of their properties for sale, which potential buyers can look at online and request an appointment.

This will be a little more complicated, since you will have to post pictures probably at least weekly. You can also offer to take the pictures for your Investors. Just work out a fee that pays you well for your time, but is reasonable for the Investor. Your goal is still win-win.

Stream Number 3

Become a Real Estate Jobber Partner

Here's how it works. As an Investor you will obviously enlist the services of Jobbers. You will have the opportunity to offer them the Real Estate Jobber course from your website.

It's great for you because they get the knowledge of the course and will provide you with better leads, which takes up less of your time. It works for me because I will be able to reach more people.

You will receive a special version of the e-book Real Estate Jobbing 101 to give away from your website free. The e-book will contain links back to your website, where your Jobber-to-be can order the course, and you receive credit for the sale.

You will have a simple link on your website probably located on your birddog page, that allows them to order the course. You will receive 50% of whatever the selling price is at that time. Win-win.

If you are interested please e-mail me and I will let you know all of the program details. barry@realesatejobber.com

Stream Number 4

Take your business statewide!

Are you in a smaller market without many Investors? Well you have the ability to take your business statewide in a hurry. Here's how:

1. Do some research and find out which counties have online public record search capability.
2. Learn how to find Motivated Sellers for these counties online.
3. Contact Investors in larger cities, located in the general vicinities of the counties you will serve, and get them to sign up for your Jobber services through your website.
4. Provide as many types of Motivated Seller leads as possible, which includes all of the pertinent information you learned about in Volume 2.
5. Combine the Realty Trac leads with your public record leads.
6. Provide the leads to your Investors via e-mail weekly, as you learned in Volume 2.
7. Set up a subscription type billing arrangement. Try to charge at least \$50 per month from each Investor for this service. Again the payments and billings will be handled by your merchant account through your website.

Obviously you can't include drive-bys or find ugly properties, but this is a good way to expand your business to some larger markets. You will definitely find Investors to work with in these markets.

Use the methods outlined in Volume 2 for finding Investors. Depending on the distance it may be worth the drive to attend an investor club meeting in one of these cities. You will make a lot of contacts.

If you provide good leads you will develop relationships that will lead to mentoring. It will definitely be worth it to take a drive and spend some time with your mentor. Take advantage of this time and learn the ropes.

You may even find a mentor that is willing to expand to your small market. Remember, no matter where you live there are Motivated Sellers. Who do you think they will ask to cultivate this market? Why you of course!

Believe me an Investor will make the drive to partner with you on a \$30,000 deal that you have found. As you learn the business and begin investing you may find yourself sitting on a goldmine in your small town! With the knowledge you have gained you will be able to invest anywhere you want.

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Be Creative

These are just a few ideas I have thrown out to you. They are just a few options that you may want to consider as your website grows.

Maximize the use of your website. Be creative and discover other income streams that will add value to your business. A website is a very powerful tool, use yours to it's fullest.

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MY SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR WEBSITE

We have certainly covered a lot of information. You are probably an expert on websites now. You must be wondering what's the best way to get started? **I suggest diving right in.**



Well I didn't mean it literally, but I like your enthusiasm! You now know everything you need to know to build a great Jobber website, except which services to use.

There are thousands of varying services available, and most are very good, but some are complete rip offs. I've done hundreds of hours of research in order to find the very best values available.

My suggestions are proven entities that provide outstanding customer service. In fact I can guarantee that my recommendations will be the most cost effective resources available. Yet they will allow you to produce an extremely powerful website.

I'm so confident in my research, that **I'm offering you 30 days of free website consulting.** This consulting is available if you follow my recommendations for your hosting and merchant account services.

You should be able to use your current computer system, unless it's a complete dinosaur. A high speed Internet connection will serve you well. A digital camera will certainly come in handy.

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For web building software you can start with the free page builder tool that the hosting company provides. After gaining some experience you may want to upgrade to Microsoft FrontPage to expand your capabilities.

You can use the many free clip art sites to get your initial graphics, as you expand your website you can upgrade to Macromedia's Fireworks MX.

Let's get to the recommendations for merchant account and hosting services.

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Merchant Account Services

I recommend **PayPal** for your merchant account services. There are no set up or monthly fees. You only pay a 2.9% discount fee and a 30 cents transaction fee. This equates to about \$3 for every \$100 in credit card transactions.

For example, a \$500 referral fee will cost you less than \$15. You won't find a better deal anywhere.

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Hosting

For hosting I recommend the **Business Pro System**, it's absolutely the best value available. For only \$7.95 per month you get a list of features that could be used to build a fortune 500 website. Let's take a look at some of the features.

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MB Storage	800 MB
Your-Name.com	Free
POP3 Email Accounts / Web Based	400
Forwarding Accounts	Unlimited
Autoresponder	Unlimited
Transfer	40 GB
CGI-BIN	Included
MySQL	Included
CGI Library	Included
PHP Support	Included
Server Sides Includes	Included
Website Statistics	Included
FrontPage 2000/2002 Extensions	Included
Web Hosting "Control Panel"	Included
FTP Access	Included
Anonymous FTP Accounts	Included
Browser Based Email	Included
30-day Money Back Guarantee	Included
Online Website Builder Tool	Included
GIF Optimizer	Included
Banner Creator	Included
Commerce Related Features	
SSL Secure Server	Included
PayPal Shopping Cart	Included
Password Protected Directories	Included
Multimedia Capabilities	
Real Audio & Video	Included
Streaming Audio	Included
Macromedia Shockwave	Included
MIDI File Support	Included
MIME Types	Included
World Class Technology	
High Performance Dell PowerEdge Servers	
Customized Apache Web Server Software	
Website Backup Software	
Dual OC-48 Connections on Diverse Backbones	
Cisco Routers Using BGP4 Protocol	
Daily Tape Back-ups	
UPS Power Back-up, Diesel Back-up Generator	
24/7 Network Monitoring	

As you can see every feature that you need now and in the future is included for \$7.95 a month. You can register or transfer your domain name free, if you sign up for 12 months of service.

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The 800 megabytes of space, 400 pop e-mail accounts and 40 Gigabytes of monthly traffic allowance are unbelievable.

The website builder tool is tremendous. There are hundreds of web templates to choose from. It will automatically set up your layout and navigation system. You simply choose the color scheme and graphics.

You can add any custom page that you need to once the site is built. You can load pictures of your properties without any problem. You can even create the customized online forms for your customers to complete, as we have talked about throughout this Volume.

Of course you can add your PayPal merchant account to begin accepting credit cards. There is no other free site-building tool that comes close to these features.

You can do all of this without knowing any HTML. Let's see how easy it really is.

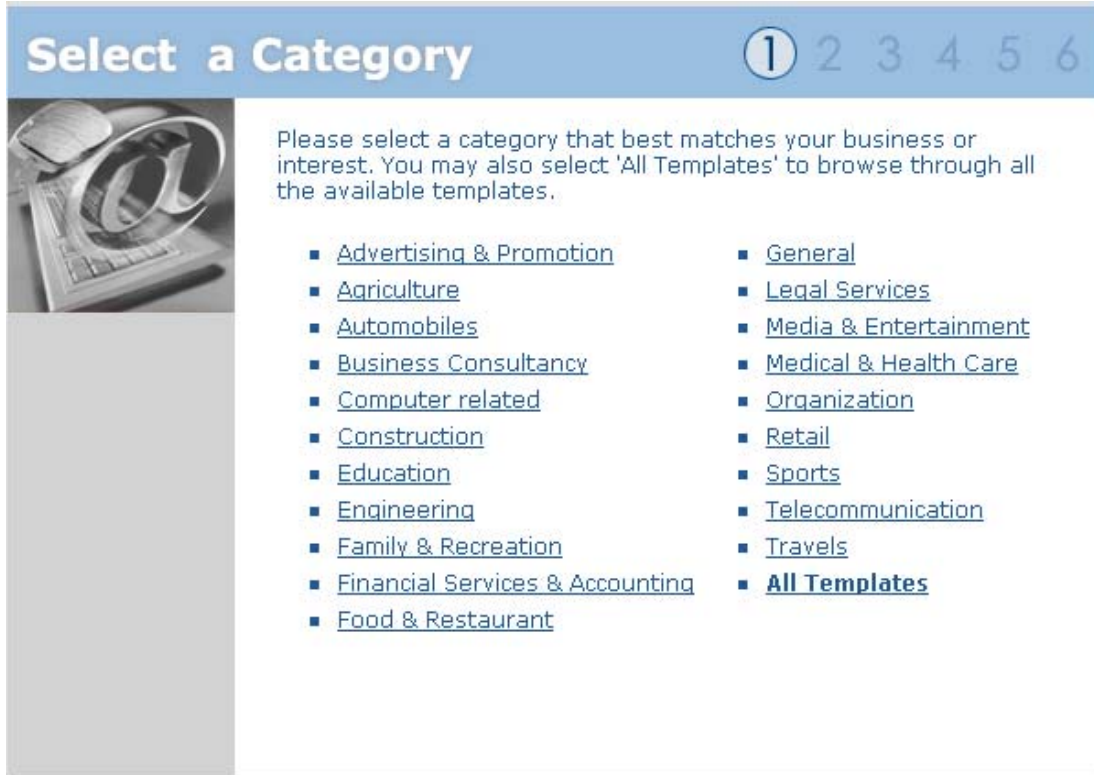


Figure 35 - Business Pro Page Builder Tool

These are some common categories; you can select "All Templates" and get a complete listing. Of course you can easily modify one of these. I'm going to select "General".



I then just selected the first template.

Choose Color & Image

1 2 3 4 5 6



Please select a color and image for your template.

Green



Next

There are several colors to choose from.

Customize Company & Slogan

1 2 3 4 5 6



Please enter the name of your Company and Slogan as it will appear on your Web site.

Company Name:

EZ Property Solutions

Enter maximum 30 characters

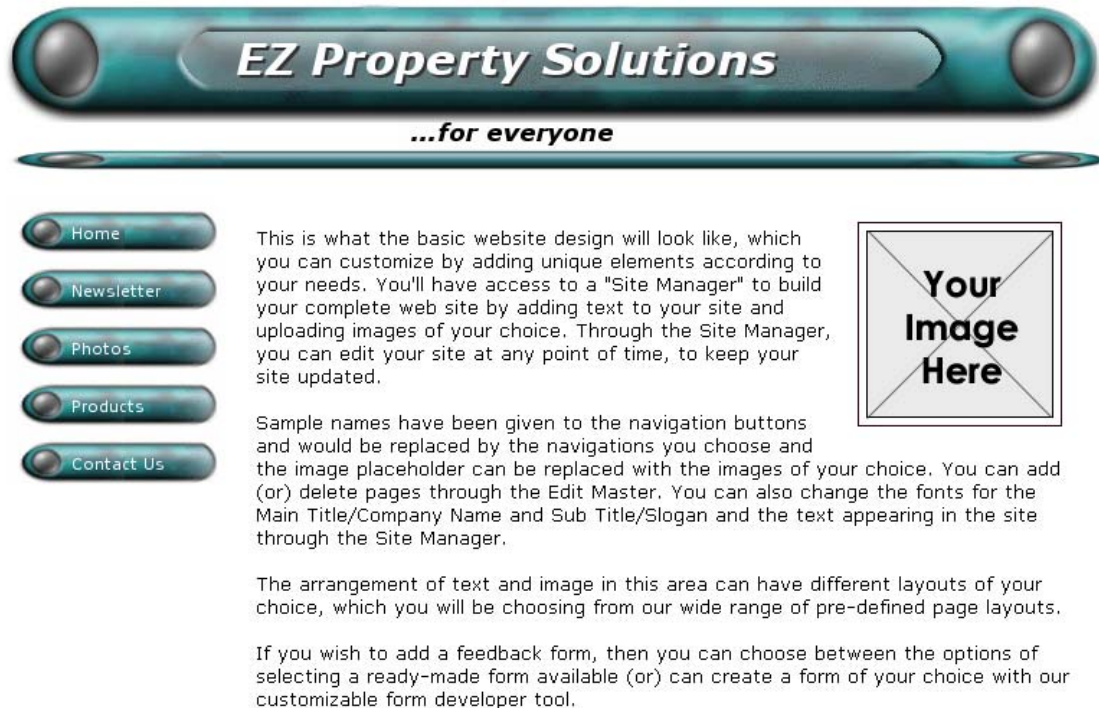
Company Slogan:

...for everyone

Enter maximum 40 characters

Submit

Now just enter your company name and slogan and click the "Submit" button.



And presto your website has been set up. You can change colors and customize the content as needed. This whole process took less than 2 minutes. Now just replace the sample content with your own.

You will still have to go through the website development cycle, but building your site is a snap with this tool. It doesn't get any easier than this.

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When you get your merchant account, and sign up for 12 months of hosting service, you will receive 30 days of free website consulting from me. Simply click the link below and follow the on screen instructions.

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Even if you are not ready to build your website right now, go ahead and register your domain name ASAP. There will be a better selection of names available, and your 30 days will not start until you are ready to begin. Thousands of names are gobbled up each day.

The link below is how I track who has requested the services. You will have to use the link to get the 30 days of free website consulting.

http://www.realestatejobber.com/web_tools.htm

When you are ready to get started just send me an e-mail!

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SUMMARY

It's Been Quite a Journey



We have certainly come a long way since the question, "Why have a website", was asked. You now understand that many small business owners already consider websites invaluable business tools. They have several important uses including, customer service, advertising and merchant services just to name a few.

The Internet has grown tremendously in popularity over the past few years, and is expected to keep gaining popularity into the foreseeable future. The sheer volume of information available makes the Internet indispensable for many businesses.

The Internet has revolutionized person-to-person communication with e-mail and websites. Information can now be shared immediately with friends, family, co-workers and business to business. Convenience is another major reason why people have embraced Internet technology.

The future of the Internet is bright, as the use of portable connection devices like cell phones and laptops will allow access to the Internet from just about anywhere.

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High-speed access will enable users to connect more quickly and download applications 90% faster than dial up. The use of portable connections and high-speed access is expected to skyrocket over the next 4 years.

Websites were used primarily for retail operations a few years ago. However, now it's an essential business communication and information-sharing tool.

Real Estate Investors are underutilizing websites and failing to grasp the value. A website is a perfect tool for Real Estate Jobbing that can add another dimension to your business. An effective and professional website can be "home made" if the process is understood.

There are several components of a website, that all have to be addressed in order to build a website. You must have a computer system, software, a domain name and a web hosting service. A merchant account is required to accept credit card payments online.

Building a website is a cycle that is always evolving. It's essential to carefully go through the vision process, as this will determine the goals and purpose of your website. After the website has been built it must go through several steps of testing to ensure it's as error free as possible.

After the site is launched it's necessary to get feedback from your users. Improvements to the site are based on this feedback. It is also important to update your website regularly and keep the content fresh.

Your website can be used to generate revenue in a variety of ways. Be creative and use your new business tool to its fullest potential!

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How Should I Get Started?

Read through the Anatomy, Development Cycle and Building Website chapters again. Check out the tools that I suggested, and you'll find they are excellent values. Determine your domain name then order your hosting service and set up your merchant account.

Now all you have to do is go through the cycle and build a website that your customers will appreciate.

Good luck, don't forget to take advantage of my 30 days of free website consulting and I'll be there to help you out along the way.

http://www.realestatejobber.com/web_tools.htm

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What's Next?

Volume 5 will give you an idea of what to expect at the next level. It's a big step, but you are well prepared to take it!

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APPENDIX A

Privacy Statement

This sample privacy statement contains all of the elements (and then some!) needed for your website. You can use it as a basis for forming a privacy statement for your website.

This is a very comprehensive privacy statement, which covers almost every privacy issue. Delete any sections that do not pertain to your website. Replace the [bracketed] information as necessary.

Developing a privacy statement is a critical stage in understanding and communicating your website policies. For many companies, drafting a privacy statement initiates a conversation about how to build trust with customers.

The following Sample Privacy Statement can serve as a template, prompting you to consider important points in your information gathering policy and practices. Before we begin, keep in mind a couple of key points:

1. Say what you do; Do what you say – The Golden Rule in privacy statements is “Do Not Lie.” The only thing worse than not posting a privacy statement is to fraudulently claim a certain business practice. State and federal governments do not look kindly on companies that claim one set of practices, and follow another.
2. Tailor the Model Privacy Statement – The following model will provide you with resources to begin developing your own privacy statement, but you should be sure not to simply cut and paste.

Use it as a starting point to create a statement tailored to your specific practices.

3. Privacy Statements are not Disclaimers – The communication of your company's privacy practices should express what is actually happening on the site, not what may happen, has happened or is planned for the future. In some cases, informing your users of the information gathering your company's site does not practice may be more effective.
4. Re-visit your privacy statement frequently – A privacy statement is a living document, designed to clearly communicate your company's privacy practices, which, for many companies, change over time. Revisit your posted privacy statement to make sure it truly reflects your current practices.

Creating a clear and accurate statement helps you build loyal relationships with your customers by providing them with the information they need to trust you with their personal information.

SAMPLE PRIVACY STATEMENT

[NAME OF COMPANY/SITE] Will keep all information collected on this website strictly private. This privacy statement covers the site [WWW.URL OF SITE.COM]. Because this Website wants to demonstrate its commitment to our users' privacy, it has agreed to disclose its information practices.

1. What personally identifiable information [NAME OF COMPANY] collects.
2. What personally identifiable information third parties collect through the Website.
3. What organization collects the information.
4. How [NAME OF COMPANY] uses the information.
5. With whom [NAME OF COMPANY] may share user information.
6. What choices are available to users regarding collection, use and distribution of the information.
7. What types of security procedures are in place to protect the loss, misuse or alteration of information under [NAME OF COMPANY] control.
8. How users can correct any inaccuracies in the information.

If users have questions or concerns regarding this statement, they should first contact [NAME OF INDIVIDUAL, DEPARTMENT OR GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR INQUIRIES] by [CONTACT INFORMATION: EMAIL, PHONE, POSTAL MAIL]

Information Collection and Use

Information Collection

[NAME OF COMPANY] is the sole owner of the information collected on [NAME OF SITE]. [NAME OF COMPANY] collects information from our users at several different points on our Website.

Registration

In order to use this Website, a user may be asked to complete a registration form. During registration a user may be asked for contact information (such as name and email address). We use this information to contact the user about services on our site for which he has expressed interest.

Order

We request information from Investors (user) on our credit card payment form. A user must provide contact information (such as name, email, and shipping address) and financial information (such as credit card number, expiration date). This information is used for billing purposes and to fill customer's orders. If we have trouble processing an order, the information is used to contact the user.

Information Use

[This paragraph should elaborate on the actual 'use' of the information. For instance, the service the site performs should be incorporated here. Also, a discussion of the use of aggregate information should be disclosed here as well. Be as specific as possible, without being contingent. Avoid 'we may do this' 'we might do that' type of language.]

Profile

We store information that we collect through cookies, log files, clear gifs, and/or third parties to create a profile of our users. A profile is stored information that we keep on individual users that details their viewing preferences. Consequently, collected information is tied to the users personally identifiable information to provide offers and improve the content of the site for the user. This profile is used to tailor a user's visit to our Website, and to direct pertinent marketing promotions to them. We [do not] share your profile with other third parties. [Your profile is shared in aggregate form only.] [Your profile is shared together with your personally identifiable information.]

Cookies

A cookie is a piece of data stored on the user's computer tied to information about the user. [Usage of a cookie is in no way linked to any personally identifiable information while on our site.] We use [both] session ID cookies [and] persistent cookies. For the session ID cookie, once users close the browser, the cookie simply terminates. A persistent cookie is a small text file stored on the user's hard drive for an extended period of time.

[Explain how cookies are used on your Website.] By setting a cookie on our site, users would not have to log in a password more than once, thereby saving time while on our site. If users reject the cookie, they may still use our site. The only drawback to this is that the user will be limited in some

areas of our site. For example, [the user will not be able to participate in any of our sweepstakes, contests or monthly drawings that take place.]

Persistent cookies enable us to track and target the interests of our users to enhance the experience on our site. See the "Profile" section.

Third Party Advertising

The ads appearing on this Website are delivered to users by [THIRD PARTY AD SERVER NAME], our Web advertising partner. Information about users' visit to this site, such as number of times they have viewed an ad (but not user name, address, or other personal information), is used to serve ads to users on this site. For more information about [THIRD PARTY AD SERVER NAME], cookies, and how to "opt-out", please [click here](#) [LINK TO: THIRD PARTY AD SERVER PRIVACY STATEMENT].

This privacy statement covers the use of cookies by [NAME OF SITE] only and does not cover the use of cookies by any advertisers.

Log Files

Like most standard Website servers we use log files. This includes internet protocol (IP) addresses, browser type, internet service provider (ISP), referring/exit pages, platform type, date/time stamp, and number of clicks to analyze trends, administer the site, track user's movement in the aggregate, and gather broad demographic information for aggregate use. IP addresses, etc. are not linked to personally identifiable information. [IP addresses are tied to personally identifiable information to enable our Web-based service.] [We use a tracking utility called [XXXX] that uses log files to analyze user movement

Clear Gifs (Web Beacons/Web Bugs)

We employ [or our third party advertising company employs] a software technology called clear gifs (a.k.a. Web Beacons/Web Bugs), that help us better manage content on our site by informing us what content is effective. Clear gifs are tiny graphics with a unique identifier, similar in function to cookies, and are used to track the online movements of Web users. The main difference between the two is that clear gifs are invisible on the page and are much smaller, about the size of the period at the end of this sentence. [Clear gifs are tied to users' personally identifiable information.] [Clear gifs are not tied to users' personally identifiable information.]

Clear Gifs can "work with" existing cookies on a computer if they are both from the same Website or advertising company. That means, for example, that if a person visited "www.companyX.com", which uses an advertising company's clear gif, the Website [or advertising company] would match the clear gif's identifier and the advertising company's cookie ID number, to show the past online behavior for that computer. This collected information would then be given to the advertising company [or Website]. To learn more

about our advertising company's use of clear gifs, please go to [NAME OF ADVERTISER'S SITE.]

In addition, we use clear gifs in our HTML-based emails to let us know which emails have been opened by the recipients. This allows us to gauge the effectiveness of certain communications and the effectiveness of our marketing campaigns. If users would like to opt-out of these emails, please see the Opt-out section.

Communications from the Site

Special Offers and Updates

We send all new members a welcoming email to verify password and username. Established members will occasionally receive information on products, services, special deals, and a newsletter. Out of respect for the privacy of our users we present the option to not receive these types of communications. Please see the Choice and Opt-out sections.

Newsletter

If a user wishes to subscribe to our newsletter, we ask for contact information such as name and email address. Out of respect for our users privacy we provide a way to opt-out of these communications. Simply send an e-mail to _____ and request to be removed from our contact list.

Service Announcements

On rare occasions it is necessary to send out a strictly service related announcement. For instance, if our service is temporarily suspended for maintenance we might send users an email. Generally, users may not opt-out of these communications, though they can deactivate their account. However, these communications are not promotional in nature.

Customer Service

We communicate with users on a regular basis to provide requested services and in regards to issues relating to their account we reply via email or phone, in accordance with the users wishes.

Sharing

Legal Disclaimer

Though we make every effort to preserve user privacy, we may need to disclose personal information when required by law wherein we have a good-faith belief that such action is necessary to comply with a current judicial proceeding, a court order or legal process served on our Website.

Aggregate Information (non-personally identifiable)

The 2004 Real Estate Jobber Course - Volume 4

We share aggregated demographic information with our partners and advertisers. *[Describe the sharing practices of what **your** site does, but be specific in your relationship with these third parties.]* This is not linked to any personally identifiable information.

Third Party Advertisers

[NAME OF COMPANY] shares Website usage information about users with a reputable third party [NAME OF THIRD PARTY] for the purpose of targeting our Internet banner advertisements on this site and other sites. For example, [NAME OF COMPANY] uses cookies and clear GIFs on this site, which allow them to recognize a user's cookie when a user visits this site. The information they collect and share through this technology is not personally identifiable. For more information about our third-party advertiser or for choices about not having this anonymous information used please [click here](#) [LINK TO: ADSERVER PRIVACY POLICY/OPT OUT].

Third Party Intermediaries

We use an outside shipping company to ship orders, and a credit card processing company to bill users for goods and services. These companies do not retain, share, store or use personally identifiable information for any secondary purposes.

Service Providers

We partner with other third parties [ANOTHER PARTY'S NAME] to provide specific services. [For example, XXXX] When the user signs up for these particular services, we share names, or other contact information [specify what information is being shared with the third party service provider] that is necessary for the third party to provide these services. These third parties are not allowed to use personally identifiable information except for the purpose of providing these services.

Business Transitions

In the event [NAME OF COMPANY] goes through a business transition, such as a merger, being acquired by another company, or selling a portion of its assets, users' personal information will, in most instances, be part of the assets transferred. Users will be notified via [email] [prominent notice on our Website for 30 days] prior to a change of ownership or control of their personal information. If as a result of the business transition, the users' personally identifiable information will be used in a manner different from that stated at the time of collection they will be given choice consistent with our notification of changes section.

Choice/Opt-out

Our users are given the opportunity to 'opt-out' of having their information used for purposes not directly related to our site at the point where we ask for information. For example, our order form has an 'opt-out' mechanism so

users who buy a product from us, but don't want any marketing material, can keep their email address off of our lists.

Users who no longer wish to receive our newsletter and promotional communications may opt-out of receiving these communications by replying to unsubscribe in the subject line in the email or email us at [EMAIL ADDRESS] [We also offer an opt-out mechanism on the [MEMBER INFORMATION PAGES] or the user may contact us at [PHONE] [EMAIL] or [POSTAL MAIL] to opt-out.]

Users of our site are always notified when their information is being collected by any outside parties. We do this so our users can make an informed choice as to whether or not they should proceed with services that require an outside party.

Links

This Website contains links to other sites. Please be aware that we, [NAME OF COMPANY], are not responsible for the privacy practices of such other sites. We encourage our users to be aware when they leave our site and to read the privacy statements of each and every Website that collects personally identifiable information. This privacy statement applies solely to information collected by this Website. *[Discuss co-branding and/or framing relations where the user may not know who is collecting the information].*

Surveys [& Contests]

[From time-to-time] our site requests information from users via surveys or contests. Participation in these surveys or contests is completely voluntary and the user therefore has a choice whether or not to disclose this information. The requested information typically includes contact information (such as name and shipping address), and demographic information (such as zip code). Contact information will be used [shared with the contest [survey] sponsors] to notify the winners and award prizes. [Anonymous] Survey information will be used for purposes of monitoring or improving the use and satisfaction of this site. Users' personally identifiable information is not shared with third parties unless we give prior notice and choice. Though we may use an intermediary to conduct these surveys or contests, they may not use users' personally identifiable information for any secondary purposes.

Tell-A-Friend

If a user elects to use our referral service for informing a friend about our site, we ask them for the friend's name and email address. [NAME OF COMPANY] will automatically send the friend a one-time email inviting them to visit the site. [NAME OF COMPANY] stores [or does not store] this information for the sole purpose of sending this one-time email [and tracking the success of our referral program]. The friend may contact [NAME OF COMPANY] at [INSERT URL OR EMAIL

ADDRESS] to request the removal of this information from our database.

Security

This Website takes every precaution to protect our users' information. When users submit sensitive information via the Website, their information is protected both online and off-line.

When our registration/order form asks users to enter sensitive information (such as credit card number and/or social security number), that information is encrypted and is protected with the best encryption software in the industry - SSL. While on a secure page, such as our order form, the lock icon on the bottom of Web browsers such as Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer becomes locked, as opposed to un-locked, or open, when users are just 'surfing'. [To learn more about SSL, follow this link [INSERT LINK].]

While we use SSL encryption to protect sensitive information online, we also do everything in our power to protect user-information off-line. All of our users' information, not just the sensitive information mentioned above, is restricted in our offices. Only employees who need the information to perform a specific job (for example, our billing clerk or a customer service representative) are granted access to personally identifiable information. Our employees must use password-protected screen-savers when they leave their desk. When they return, they must re-enter their password to re-gain access to user information. Furthermore, ALL employees are kept up-to-date on our security and privacy practices. Every [quarter], as well as any time new policies are added, our employees are notified and/or reminded about the importance we place on privacy, and what they can do to ensure our users' information is protected. Finally, the servers that store personally identifiable information are in a secure environment, [behind a locked cage][in a locked facility]. *[Be sure that your actual practices are reflected in this section. For example, if your employees are updated on privacy every 6 months, then state that, rather than a statement that is false. Another example, **must** employees use password-protected screensavers?]*

If users have any questions about the security at our Website, users can send an email to [EMAIL ADDRESS.]

Supplementation of Information

In order for this Website to properly fulfill its obligation to users it is necessary for us to supplement the information we receive with information from 3rd party sources.

Credit Check

For example, to determine if users qualify for one of our credit cards, we use their name and social security number to request a credit report. Once we determine a user's credit-worthiness, this document is destroyed.

ID [Address] Verification

We use [THIRD PARTY/THIRD PARTY SOFTWARE] to verify a user's [identity][address] to *[state why it is necessary to verify the user's identity or address]*.

Purchasing History

In order for this Website to enhance its ability to tailor the site to a user's preference, we combine information about the purchasing habits of users with similar information from our partners, [COMPANY Y & COMPANY Z], to create a personalized user profile. When a user makes a purchase from either of these two companies, the companies [we] collect [and share] personal [and demographic] information back with us.

Enhancement of Marketing Profile

We purchase third party marketing data and add it to our existing user database to better target our advertising and provide pertinent offers we think our users would be interested in. We use this information to enhance or overlay the 'profile' of individual users. This aggregate marketing data is therefore tied to the users' personally identifiable information. See also the "Profile."

Correcting/Updating/Deleting/Deactivating Personal Information

If a user's personally identifiable information changes (such as zip code, phone, email or postal address), or if a user no longer desires our service, we provide a way to correct, update or delete/deactivate users' personally identifiable information. This can usually be done at the [member information page] or by emailing our Customer Support at [EMAIL ADDRESS]. [Or, contact us by telephone or postal mail at the contact information listed below].

Notification of Changes

If we decide to change our privacy policy, we will post those changes to this privacy statement, the homepage, and other places we deem appropriate so our users are always aware of what information we collect, how we use it, and under what circumstances, if any, we disclose it. We will use information in accordance with the privacy policy under which the information was collected.

If, however, we are going to use users' personally identifiable information in a manner different from that stated at the time of collection we will notify users via email. Users will have a choice as to

whether or not we use their information in this different manner. However, if users have opted out of all communication with the site, or deleted/deactivated their account, then they will not be contacted, nor will their personal information be used in this new manner. In addition, if we make any material changes in our privacy practices that do not affect user information already stored in our database, we will post a prominent notice on our Website notifying users of the change. In some cases where we post a notice we will also email users, who have opted to receive communications from us, notifying them of the changes in our privacy practices.

Contact Information

If users have any questions or suggestions regarding our privacy policy, please contact us at:

Phone

Fax

Email

Postal Address

Website URL [HELP DESK OR CUSTOMER SUPPORT OR PRIVACY OFFICER]

NOTES

Start Your Plan Here

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal lines across the entire page. Each set consists of three lines: two solid black outer lines and one dashed blue middle line, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The lines are evenly spaced and extend from the left margin to the right edge of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.